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LONDON SOCIETY.

An Illustrated Magazine

OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

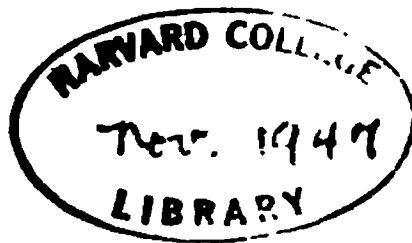
THE HOURS OF RELAXATION.

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LONDON SOCIETY.

JULY 1879.

A SHOP TO LET.

A SHOP was to let, not long since. It was in a main and flourishing street of the metropolis; it was on the best, or sunny, side of it; it was at a spot trodden by a myriad of busy feet daily, and reverberating with the roar and rattle of ten thousand busy wheels.

There were eight hundred and more inquirers who entered this shop to know particulars of its rent and so forth; and it is the intention here to make known the oddities of a few of them.

'W h e w !' went the eloquent whistle of one. 'Stiff, isn't it?' was shot out by another. Whilst a third cried, 'Hot enough, surely!' and they all three vanished with uniform rapidity.

Then there came a little milliner, all finery, all emphasis, all expression. 'Fabulous!' she cried. 'Fabulous! Fabulous!' with eyes up, head up, hands up; with eyes up, head up, hands up,

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all over again before she had taken herself away.

'What an awfu' rent!' declared a tall sharp Scotchwoman. 'It's quite reedie-ulous! They'll never pay it!'

Another lady—red-haired, tiny, timid—peeped in nervously, popped out nervously, peeped in nervously once more, must have received the answers to her nervous question like a charge from a faultless gun, since she was gone after it beyond the limits of the keenest investigation.



'What's the figure?' demanded a strapped up little man, as short

in speech as he was in stature ; and as convinced of his own business-like affinities and acumen as if he had been a complete directorate or the entire Board of Trade.

He was told.

'Ah, very nice !' he cried, crying it sarcastically ; and then he added, 'I had been in hopes, now, that you were going to say something decent.'

'And what would be something decent ?' was the question put to him, in amused return.

'Why,' he cried out, 'a hundred a year of course !' (Exactly a third of the demand.) 'A hundred a year ; not a penny more !' After which he was gone, in rebellion and revolution.

'La-la-li-lah ! Tardle-di-dah !' sang a gentleman of the gay and dashing kind, as he sauntered in, unconscious of the agent sitting at a table, and as he sauntered to the shop's far end. 'La-la-li-lah !' went his song again ; whilst he amused himself by opening all the available doors, by looking up at a skylight, by peering up the stairs. 'La-la-li-lah ! Tardle-di-dah ! De-dah-di— O, I beg your pardon !' for he had sauntered round into full face, and was as shocked as he should have been, with inquiries and answers, only troubled air to him, and he swiftly away, hot and blushing.

'Rather too important for me !' hammered out a pompous puffy little personage, with the evident intention of hammering in the clear notion that the importance was nothing equivalent to his own.

'Ah, that premium, that premium !' was the deprecating cry of a tall and middle-aged shrew, as she shook her head and her forefinger archly, and was obliged to depart without any farther proceeding.

And, indeed, it must have been rather aggravating (to moneyless

people) to be asked for money down, as some sign that they had money in possession, and as some

sort of security that, after three months' run of a business-place, there would be something tangible for the landlord of it forthcoming.

A tall vinegarish young lady, for instance, was evidently torn with this aggravation painfully. 'Now, what is premium for ?' she fretted. 'Premium is what I can't understand !'

A hard man, with only his head in, and his wife still out, treated the idea with withering scorn. 'What's the premium for ?' he demanded. 'There's no business ; the place is a mere shell, dirty, and empty ! Ha !'—in a mode quite melodramatic— 'shouldn't think of paying a premium to anybody, anyhow, anywhere !'

A plump young girl, with a ragged hat, with no gloves, with soiled flesh, with a general aspect of tawdriness and poor lodgings and dissipation, melted down premium, rent, repairs, stock, furniture, decoration, everything, into

the thinnest and airiest intangibility.

'Two hundred pounds' premium?' she remarked easily. 'Ah well, that's not much—is it?—considering where the shop is, and how much I like it. Now, I'll just tell you how I'm placed. My father is dead, and my mother has a large family of young children to look to; but my aunt has taken us all in, and I'm sure she'd come and live with us here directly. You see, I've been apprenticed to a milliner, and I could sell millinery in this shop very nicely; and what with the things mamma has and the things my aunt has I could manage beautifully. Then we have a little money papa left, perhaps twenty pounds; and I'm going now to work at that large draper's—day-worker, you know—and if I stay a fortnight I shall earn another two pounds, and then to make up the rest I'll even sell my trinkets; I sha'n't mind it at all! Yes,'—with one or two decisive looks round—'I'm sure I could make a very tasty shop of it. So will you promise you won't let anybody else have it till six o'clock? Thank you. *Good-day.* I'm sure to come.' For it was scarcely worth while to crush out such a baseless dreamer by any recital of facts and figures; and if enjoyment were to be found in nonsensical narrations, the enjoyment might as well remain.

A fit successor to this young person was a grandiloquent old lady, similarly affected with light-headedness and eccentricity. She was stately-featured, rusty, pinched; and remarkably ceremonious, yet glib.

'I am on my way now to consult my solicitors,' she said, confidentially, with excellent accent and articulation. 'My solicitors are highly respectable gentlemen

of Lincoln's Inn; they have sent for me. I should explain that I am the most fortunate woman over all my affairs, the most business-like. I happen to be talented, very talented, that's how it is. To see me now, you would scarcely think it, for I'm not dressed, you see, being only on my way to my solicitors (highly respectable gentlemen of Lincoln's Inn); but I am the cleverest designer in London. Now, of course, if I take this shop, I shall get a manager. From Paris. That would be my plan. For myself, I should apply myself to the rest of my very extensive business affairs. I should direct the manager (from Paris) only; and I should succeed admirably. I should make a fortune in no time.'

Had the good lady given the smallest evidence of having made even half a fortune up to then, this would have been more credible. She and Fortune, however, were not on terms of intimate acquaintance; unless, indeed, Fortune's most favoured friends are in the habit of being dressed in torn lace and battered millinery, in slit silk and ropy ribbons. She was gone, though, as the rest had gone, with her calculations in her head clear and precise and confident, and she gave place to a man of about thirty years of age, tall, dark, wild, wiry; the possessor of a dozenfold anybody else's jerk and energy and boring power and impetuosity.

'Bless me!' he cried, as he rushed in, with a tear and a stare. 'This shop to let? Is it possible? Goodness gracious me! To let? And has there ever been any business done in it? And what sort of business, pray, in the world? Ah, that's not my business, nor anything near it. I'm a so-and-so maker. I do a most pushing business in one of

the most pushing thoroughfares. I have a partner too. Capital man. Suit each other excellently. Just as pushing as I am. Now,

And I'm no capitalist, I'm a pushing man. However, my partner will be the man to judge. And—let me see. How long is the lease? Seven years, fourteen, twenty-one, forty, fifty, ninety-nine? Ah, I have it all right now. Thank you. But—bless me! Goo-oodness gracious! Goo-oodness hearts alive! And the same was his refrain half-a-dozen times again, as he strode out, by jerks or pulses, and as he stopped at every pulse to give an exclamation more.

He shall be contrasted with a suave, with a smooth, with an insinuating, gentleman; a pattern of primness and polish, as innocent of commerce and commercial necessities as might be a choice flower in a conservatory.

'Now,' said this gentleman, 'now,' and he approached very

it strikes me we might do another pushing trade here. There's a residence up-stairs, isn't there? Ah, I thought so. Then I'll just rush up and look.'

And he did, after which he rushed down again, with the same tear and stare, the same burst of vivid ejaculation.

'Bless me!' it began, as before. 'Goo-oodness gracious me! And such a place is to let! And you mean to tell me that a man and his wife lived in this place, just as I see it in this dirt and this condition! Goo-oodness gracious! Well, I'll just dot the terms down in my book. No chair, thank you; no, I'll stand, this will do. Now then, what's to-day, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday? Ah yes, to be sure. And the rent is 200*l.*, 300*l.*, 400*l.*, what? Thank you. And—ah, what do you say? A premium of 200*l.* Nonsense! Why, you want a capitalist to take the place! A capitalist!



close, with his forefinger up, and he himself nearly on tip-toe, 'this will be an excellent spot for a hose-er's, I am certain. It is true there's a hose-er only three doors off, but that is all in its favour. I am no hose-er myself; it is that I have a friend, in the country, whose daughter is on

the point of being married. Nay, my strong impression is that she is married. My friend (Mr. Jenkins of Jenkshire, very wealthy) gave me to understand the wedding was fixed for either the very end of last month, or the very beginning of this, I cannot call to mind now which; and as to-day is the 3d, I think most likely it is all over. Now—with the forefinger up again, and upon his lips coquettishly,—‘my friend (Mr. Jenkins of Jenkshire)—Whew, whew! Excuse me, pray! Whew, whew, whew!’

It was a shrill whistle; it was a breathless glance round; and the polite gentleman was off, threading in and out of the street-folk, in ardent chase of a white poodle-dog. The recovery was speedy, and brought the polite gentleman back again, out of breath, it is true, but in no way out of smoothness, or polish, or silky circumlocution.

‘Excuse me, excuse me,’ went his suave apologies; ‘but as I was saying, when I had to run away so unceremoniously, my thought is—Whew! Where’s that dog? Whew! Ah, all right! Thank you!—my thought is that as this is a capital spot for a hose-er’s, I’ll tell my friend (Mr. Jenkins) all about it. Now—Whew, whew, whew!’

Off again. First the white poodle, and then the polite gentleman. Off; with the whistle growing fainter, with the nimble legs lost to view soon, entirely among the hurrying crowd. But the nimble legs brought the polite gentleman back in time, his dog with him, and he as polite as before, and as much on tiptoe. And why had he returned? Simply to bid a smooth good-day; simply to put an ornamental finis, as it were, to his satin-bound diamond-edition volume. For he

had the terms; he had delivered himself of his valuable hose-er opinion; and there was nothing more to be done.

Now foreigners, very oddly, seemed particularly attracted by this shop that was to let. They came, sometimes two and three a day, and always fruitlessly.

‘Vot ees eet to go een?’ asked a white-fleshed, a black-haired, unhappy little Frenchman. ‘Ah, sanka!’ went his sigh, when he was told, and when the telling made him unhappily go out again.

‘Scuce me,’ was the cry of a pretty young German lady, who had mastered ‘raint,’ but was powerlessly aground at the new idea of premium. ‘Dat, dat! Ah, ‘scuce me, I don’ know vot dat iss!’ And she had to shrug herself away, remaining in the fog, or veil, of mystification.

‘It iss ee-mence!’ came from another German lady, neither pretty nor young, but a very wasp for buzz and vividness. ‘And dis—dis street iss nutting!’ she declared tossingly, with her superior continental judgment of traffic and locality. ‘I don’ tink moch of dis street, dis. It iss nutting, I say to you!’

‘Gootness in heavens high!’

bubbled out the exclamation of a round little Dutchman, with some humour in him. 'Den I veesh I vos de lantlort! Ah, I veesh I hat half a tozen houses! You make me afrait!' So his fear took his hat off gaily, and made him recross the threshold.

But the oddest foreigner of all was a ruddy, stumpy, chubby, old Frenchman. He was dressed in thick country-cut brown cloth; he was as perfect a John-Bull farmer as if he had been born in

Cornshire, and had always breakfasted on beer and bacon. There never was a greater philological surprise than when his broad lips broadened to bring out the Gallic-Anglo 'Von veek,' instead of the expected provincial 'Oi be,' and 'Zounds,' and 'Zur.'

'Von veek?' was his question; looking very earnest and thorough. 'How moch par von veek?'

There was no price for one week he was told. The premises were to be let for a long time, at a yearly rental; to a man who could afford a large outlay for repairs and alterations.

'Mais, I haf von leetle eggs-ee-bee-zion,' he urged. 'Von vair goot leetle eggs-ee-bee-zion; et I most haf place for von veek, two veek, tree veek, to show. Say, s'il vous plait, how moch?'

The fact of a long lease had kind repetition. The impossibility to let for a temporary purpose was explained.

But the sturdy monsieur stuck to his proposition sturdily. 'Ah, mais von veek!' he repeated. 'No matter von veek, two veek, tree veek, more! I show my leetle eggs-ee-bee-zion, et de maison ees here, all de same! Ah, say von veek! My leetle eggs-ee-bee-zion be so goot here! Dair ees beaucoup de passage, et I most haf de monde to see my eggs-ee-bee-zion. Say, now, for von veek. Say how moch?'

Refusal had to come once more; with the suggestion accompanying it that there might be neighbourhoods less solid, less prosperous, where rooms might be hired for the short period required. No. A spot less solid, less prosperous, held no fascination. To the place where he then stood the burly foreigner stuck, with very anti-Gallic and thorough Britannic adhesion.

'My leetle eggs-ee-bee-zion has been in Paris, dans le Rue Rivoli,' his bluff coaxing continued. 'In Bruxelles, in Marseilles, in Rouen, in Toulouse, in Bordeaux—partout. My leetle eggs-ee-bee-zion veel be so goot here. It is ethnologique—it. It is known vot it ees, ethnologique! Yes?'

Quite well (with a secret suspicion of stare-eyed wax-work). But, in spite of it, there was allusion to the limited size of the shop, to the comparative low height of it, to—anything thought to be the means of dislodging the inquirer safely and affably.

'Ah, it veel be goot!' cried

the Frenchman, knocking all the excuses down ; painstaking, eager, serious, as he was. 'I veel haf de monde come for tree pence, four pence. It ees scientifique, my leetle eggs-ee-bee-zion ; it ees in de Costom House now, moch money for me ; I can bring le tout here ; I veel haf de musique ; all. Say ?'

It was useless, of course, and at last it was seen to be useless ; and the breadth and the brown clothing and the persuasiveness reluctantly disappeared. Now the thought of the fitness of this shop that was to let to be a place for an exhibition came to an Englishman also. He entered, making a short business-like proposal to fit it up for a giant, becoming petrified with astonishment when the proposal was as shortly declined. Might the premises be hired for a few days for an auction ? was a question also several times repeated ; the auctions being of glass, say, of a trunk-maker's stock, of cheap jewelry, of electro-plate. Indeed, the place was conceived, on a wild superficial glance, to be suitable for every purpose and every trade almost under the sun. And as it is manifestly impossible for any premises anywhere to be fit for everything, so these poor premises could not be fit either ; and when this was discovered, they became the target for a perfect pelt of depreciatory remarks.

'Why ! Half-a-dozen cabinets would fill it up,' cried a cabinet-maker, looking indignantly at the bricks and mortar, as if he would like to pestle them into crumbs. 'Just see ! If I were to hang chandeliers all along this ceiling, there's no one could walk under,' complained a chandelier-dealer ; wanting, he, to annihilate lath and plaster. 'Useless,' decided a hairdresser. 'There's no

room for gentlemen on the shop-floor, and gentlemen *never* go upstairs ; the ladies' trade only is done above !' Then the house was said to be a 'rummy' old place (with a wink) ; to be in the hole (with a sneer) ; in the flat (critically) ; to be wrong for the various reasons that it had no workshops at the back, no entrance in the rear, no back-parlour, no deeper run behind, no new walls, no new front, no new floor, no new stairs ; that it was in shocking condition, was 'awfully' old, was so *very* down, was too large, was too small, was without its 'cases,' wanted rebuilding, was such that a lease of it—bless *me* !—would be a burden and not a benefit ! was certainly no accommodation to be paid for, anyhow !

But among the eight hundred (odd) inquirers, there were many who knew the market-value of the place to a sixpence, and who would have bought it, out and out (at a bright reduction), forthwith.

'Come, ascertain, will you, if I can have it for 3500*l*.' said a pock-marked impecunious-looking man, carrying a black-leather bag. 'And say, please, I'm prepared to give a twenty-pound cheque on the Such Bank, as a deposit, down.'

A couple of Assyrian-featured young Hebrew brothers, in fawn-coloured top-coats, offered 3000*l*. for the 'old place,' after only a minute's jaunty inspection ; some ladies were not indisposed to heap the thousands up into four ; and whenever persons did approve, they would come in three times, four times, five times ; they would bring with them their builders, their advisers, their wives ; they would measure, sound, test, scrape, poke in penknives, rattle at walls, tap windows, pull bells, give heavy jumps upon the floor, do

all sorts of things to be sure of safety and solidity.

'Well, what do you ask *now*?' cried a tall hard man, in a low soft hat, particularly active at this sort of work, and who wrote all his researches and discoveries in a note-book, whilst he kept rushing in and out to look up at the house-front and write down something more. 'You're down of course? Not! Why, you'll never get it! Don't tell me!'

He was reminded of the district, of the traffic, of how the trades-people invariably prospered, to the right, to the left, and straight over, across.

'Tut-tut!' he cried, after some rapid glances and another rush. 'That fellow there is doing well enough, I admit; but why? Because he married a wife with a large fortune! Not but what he's a fine fellow, mind you. Yes, yes, Bobby's a fine fellow!' Bobby having country estates, carriages, position, scientific reputation; Bobby being, probably, utterly ignorant of even this familiar's existence. 'Poor Bob, poor Bob! Ah, I know Bobby well enough! But the terms? You don't mean to say—'

Yes; but there had been the meaning to say, and, in the end, the tall hard man in the low soft hat found he had dotted down memoranda in his note-book for very little purpose, and had not won his way, for all his overbearance and loud expostulation.

'It's only me,' squeezed out a wheezy shabby little old man (for a variety), advancing just his mottled old head in and nothing more. 'It's *only* me! What is the rent, may I ask? I'm so often asked by others, and as I don't know, I can't tell!'

'Eh?' venturing in a little farther, and showing very stained and threadbare clothes. 'I'm a

little deaf, I beg your pardon, and there's a great noise going on with the coaches and other things

on wheels. O, ah, well, you'll be sure to let, you know, because all the property on this spot always *does*. But I'll tell you what,' and he came in then quite, being about to impart a valuable secret: 'it is that *confounded* hoarding round the building next door that's agin you! There; but never mind. It will be gone soon. And I thought as it was *only* me, there was no harm for me just to pop in, was there? With which the good-natured little man popped out again, taking his curious little individuality away.

A fantastic and mannered little milliner, out of all the fantastic and mannered little milliners who entered, shall next be placed on record.

'I'm a great favourite,' she minced out, with solid self-belief, —'a great favourite with many members of the aristocracy. There's Lady Greenwich Gravesend, and there's Lady Portmadoc, and the Countess of Merioneth—all their ladyships know me, and like me,

and would give me their custom directly. I know their style, and can suit them. Lady Greenwichia in particular, has said to me often, "Nellie, Nellie, why *don't* you take a shop for yourself, and make your fortune!" She thinks so much of me, she'll let me have all the money I want, I'm certain. And besides, there's her ladyship's sister, the Honourable Mrs. Torquay, just married; and there's her ladyship's mamma, the Countess-dowager of Newbiggin-on-the-Sea: I should have their custom as well, only for her ladyship's asking. So I shall think about it, seriously. Yea, I'd have caps and headdresses in that window, and bonnets in this, and muslin-curtains here, and looking-glasses all round; and a carpet on the floor, and—and—(after a good many more minutes of the unnecessary confidence and commercial pro and con.)—"I'll lay all my plans before Lady Greenwichia, and you'll be sure to see me again, very soon."

There could not, in fact, have been any variety of man, woman, or child, who did not come in to this shop that was to let. Horsey men, marked with smallpox, drove up in traps; humpty-backed women followed, and women with respirators and great blue bull's-eye specs. Dainty little bodices arrived, and quarrelsome personages, and ratty little men, and noseey people, high in the talk, the manner, and the brow. Some women came who were old, and old-fashioned with barrel-curls; some who were young, and who aimlessly hung about, neither staying nor going, whilst they rolled their tongues. A wee man would appear dwindled to a mere mite; and then there would enter a stagey 'father,' snortish, waisted, caned, and ringed. An ostrich-like lady, using (sideways)

a round brown eye, would be succeeded by a drabby person, fawn-faced, in fawn silk. From a red-bearded foreigner in a flapped fur cap, there had to be a turn to a beautiful English lady with amber hair, and tinted eyelashes,

and cheeks manufactured of a soft and peachy pink. It was diversion enough, indeed, to watch, to note; to take people in their humour, to see teaching in them, and to carry the lesson home. As for the house—

'Say'st thou that house is dark? Why, it hath bay-windows, transparent as barricadoes; and the clear stones, towards the south-north, are as lustrous as ebony!'

Of a truth, quite as absurd things were said of this shop that was to let, during ten months' intimacy with it. But let it be noted that when the people came who finally took it, they came thoughtfully and quietly, being full of anxiety and deliberation; having no satire or

bluster, no supposition that they would get their purpose answered by haughtiness or by the cut of a joke. They had made their calculations before they arrived, for they knew the main points of the spot they were coming to, the likely price of it, the scale of accommodation probably to be found. They wished to be undisturbed, too, over the searching survey they made; they wished to take their full time at it; they wished to see, not how much better the place would have been had it been of this sort and of that, but whether, taking the property as it actually existed, they could contrive to fit it to their use. And by and by, when it was decided that measurements might be made to agree, and that it was possible the price and terms

could be adjusted, there came a flush of hope and earnestness in the husband's cheeks, there was a tremor in the voice of the nice young wife, and clear tears were over-filling her eyes. It was to be accounted for, it came out, afterwards. It had happened, in the old courting days, before marriage had come, that this young couple had ever and anon strolled by this very house, always declaring it was the place their ambition would lead them to, if ever they had the means. And as the means had since been accumulated, and the house was empty, they had come to it now, they were satisfied and gave satisfaction, and it became their own.

Which is a pretty and pleasant fact, as the last fact to be mentioned relative to *A Shop to Let*.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

X.

THE ROMANCE OF INVENTION: HENRY BESSEMER.

WHAT is romance and what are knights-errant, and have we got either now? Many will be able to answer that there was an age of Arthurian romance, but that the reading of its lucubrations as a serious business was knocked on the head by Don Quixote. As to chivalry, knights and gentlemen were doomed by railways, and the last of these personages is on his way to the British Museum or Madame Tussaud's.

Such is the common belief; but who knows? Amadis de Gaul and the Four Sons of Aymon may no longer be read; but has not the Poet Laureate put new song and new life into the *mort d'Arthur*, made artists paint its scenes and his, and given a new popular acceptance to the phantom-forms of the Round Table? Not a young lady here or in our other English world beyond the Atlantic sea, but has wept at the sorrows of the queens and damsels, and has made darlings of the knights, like dolls for girls out of pinafores to make love to, in their daydreams.

Although St. George's-day had ceased until this year to be a living festival in merry England, although its war-cry had become dumb, and the red cross of St. George, which 'braved, a thousand years, the battle and the breeze,' no longer waves aloft, all is not dead. The boys here read the Seven Champions of Christendom, the English immigrants in Canada and the United States keep St. George's-day in earnestness, and they and their wives and daugh-

ters wear roses on that day, as do the Fifth Fusiliers. St. George is coming to life, and none dare say but that all the Seven Champions will soon be afoot.

Romance never died in England, it lives with the breath of the men and boys, and even of the women. Look at that young mother and her slender sister, out in the wilderness of Queensland or Natal or New Zealand or Vancouver, minding the lonely hut at home, and while the men are far afield, driving or fighting the naked or half-naked blacks. Yet these women went through life but tamely at home; for there was no such call upon them. Shakespeare is but the echo of the trumpets of romance, and his histories on the stage are but its embodiment awakening the people even to this day.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* owes much of its popularity to its adventures, struggles, and fights with the embodied powers of darkness. To descend to the childish Jack the Giant-Killer and Jack and the Beanstalk, these have never been displaced. In the greed for such things they are sought beyond an English shape, and the *Arabian Nights* charm youth in their abridgment, and older folk in all the maturity of text and enrichment of notes, with which the great Oriental scholar Lane has endowed them. All these creations of imagination live in the popular mind in company with what is their great exemplar, Robinson Crusoe. It

is idle to say Crusoe is not an historical personage, and is only a fiction, and not even a legend. Crusoe is the Englishman, even to his setting forth on his last voyage in later life.

We may, if we like, entertain a doubt whether Crusoe was really born in Yorkshire in the year cited; but we go on practically giving faith to all the main story. It was not that Defoe was so cunning a writer, but that we are ever ready to believe him. We may not be over-curious either about the Giant Blunderbore, or as to what order or genus of dragon St. George killed, and whether the brute was graminivorous or carnivorous; but whatever the world may discuss, we give about as good credence to these tales as we do to many articles of our faith.

All this is no digression, but a way of getting home to facts, which we may not so readily understand if we look at them dryly, as delineated by what is called common sense, and what is often common nonsense, when offered as a representation to the body of mankind. We want our readers to contemplate the giants, dragons, magicians, and enchantments which are to be met with in this daily life of England in the nineteenth century, and what manner of men those must be who combat with them.

We understand the men who stood at bay at Rorke's Drift; we understand the captain of the merchantman who, having seen every woman to the boats, stands on the deck as sinks the doomed ship. All these, and the many deeds of heroism which shine in an otherwise degenerate age, we can comprehend because there is physical danger in them, and there are crowds, and there is the sudden flash of light and life.

We do not bring so vividly to our minds the man in the black coat who but now passed us in the street, or who, for that matter, is our neighbour in a near house. We do not apprehend how he, at the peril of brain and life, has undergone privations and hardships and anxieties and disappointments; how he has passed through the wreckage of life in the contest with what are truly the monstrous powers of darkness, and has come forth, like the paladin of old, the hero of his country, and the benefactor of mankind.

The cool determined courage which must man him who, in a good cause, will combat with the apathy of the learned and the vulgar, the ignorance of a government department, and the corrupt obstructiveness of English law, must be in no degree inferior to those qualities which, under the charm of the poet, we accept as the highest characteristics of the brave and illustrious knight. This has been brought home to our reflections many a time, but not the less forcibly by some passages in the life of Henry Bessemer which have latterly either come before the public or have reawakened our remembrance. He is only one of many men of his kind, though it is but seldom we get at the inner life of such, and in this case by the mere chance of controversy.

We may very fairly say that in naming Henry Bessemer it is not at all likely that many of our readers will know whom we mean, and yet each one has derived some personal advantage from him. There will, however, be a number who by some chance have heard of Bessemer steel; but what Bessemer is, or rather who, whether a machine or a man, dead or alive, is another thing. There is an enormous quantity of Bessemer

iron and steel all over the world, and it is quite a new thing.

Now the most common way of doing justice to this author of a great invention is, to give a technical description of the iron manufacture, and to show in what the improvements consist. Beyond this may be enumerated the great benefits which this new industry has conferred on the country, and what are our obligations to him who introduced it. This is not our meaning now; but to leave the whole of these matters aside, and to accept the invention as the world has done as an acknowledged success, and to deal rather with the man in what is in effect the romance of life, not the romance of daring on the distant sea, not that which will gain the Victoria Cross in far-off battle, but the chivalric struggle against obstacles and difficulties which may and must be fought out by the mind of man even in the very midst of our homes.

The scientific papers are now ardent in the advocacy of original research, and the student who reads has before him visions of honour and glory, fellowships, professorships, honours, decorations, medals, stars, the homage of the great, the veneration of the public, and long-lasting glory, if not immortality. If, however, the student values his own peace of mind, he will think narrowly before he ventures on the quest of the Sangrail in original research, for the rarer his inventions the greater will be his peril. Few think of this and fewer know it. What the student may do with safety and with profit is to hang on to the skirts of some popular man or accepted authority, illustrate his doctrines, but most carefully avoid correcting or confuting him. Then, by the time the doctrines of the great authority have

gone their way, and lost their newness, and been found out in their untruthness, the votary of science in such wise will have acquired the honour and glory and rewards which the successful in research had yearned for, and have not got. It may be allowable perhaps, to alter the shape of the hook in a mousetrap, or to show the chemical rationale of toasting the cheese in a more recondite fashion; but woe to the man who does away with mouse-traps, thwarts the mousetrap users, and spoils the trade of the mousetrap maker!

A man may flatter himself by rare examples, that by a great and successful invention he may himself succeed and realise a large fortune. There are such cases, but there are others, and one of Bessemer's predecessors, J. B. Heath, is one of them. Setting other interesting parts of his career in India and here aside, Heath invented a cast or silver steel process, which enabled the Sheffield manufacturers to overcome their foreign rivals, and make silver steel and superior qualities of steel. Thus the price of the article was reduced twenty pounds per ton, and Heath's stipulated reward was one pound per ton out of the twenty he saved. He was fully successful, so the steel manufacturers combined to oust him of his pittance, as they said they did not see why he should take their money. Thus he was plunged in that fearful and costly litigation which characterises English law-courts, and his claim was held to be invalid, because the manufacturers had adopted an invention of Heath's own not embraced in that patent. It will be seen that Bessemer was served by the Government after the same fashion.

Heath's fortune was absorbed

in experiments and lawyers' fees, and he died ruined and broken-hearted. Had he lived a few years longer it is neither impossible nor improbable that the judges would have altered the law in another way, as from time to time they do. His case is only one out of too many.

Where Henry Bessemer was born, and when, may be looked for in *Men of the Time* and the biographical dictionaries. We have, however, something of his early life given by himself in reference to a vindication he was driven to make. At the age of eighteen, having been born in a small country village in Hertfordshire (on the 19th January 1813) of a respectable family, he came to London, 'knowing no one, and no one knowing me. A mere cipher in this vast sea of human enterprise.' His studious habits and love of invention soon gained a footing for him, and at twenty he found himself finishing a mode he had invented of taking copies from antique and modern basso relievos in a manner which enabled him to stamp them on cardboard, thus producing thousands of embossed copies of the highest works of art at a small cost. Notwithstanding the trivial cost, some of these productions are to be found in the hands of curious collectors, to whom the beauty of the novel workmanship commended them. A fine medalion of George IV. is among these.

The facility with which the young Bessemer could make a permanent die, even from a thin paper original, capable of producing a thousand copies, would have opened a wide door to successful fraud, if his process had been known to unscrupulous persons; for there is not a government stamp or the paper seal of a corporate body that every common

office-clerk could not forge in a few minutes at the cost of a penny, at the office of his employer or his own home. The public knowledge of such a means of forging would at that time have shattered the whole system of H.M. Stamp Office, had Mr. Bessemer allowed a knowledge of his method to escape. Mr. Bessemer's straightforward mind leads him to speak of what would have been the consequences of his 'incautiousness.'

Some of our readers will here think we are leading them astray, as Sir Lancelot of the Lake is not expected to be found in a workshop; but this is quite a mistake, for a knight should be proficient in all arts useful to mankind, and necessarily in engineering. The correctness of our delineation will, however, be proved by the successive adventures and the temper of the adventurer. Some will consider there was simplicity in Henry Bessemer; but it was the single-mindedness of a high character and of great genius above the petty arts of mean man. No sooner had the fact dawned on him of the danger to the commonwealth than he began to consider if some new stamp could be devised to prevent so serious a mischief. While so engaged he found out that the Government were themselves aware that they were losers to a great amount by the transfer of stamps from old deeds to new skins of parchment, a transfer of old lamps for new ones, to the great detriment of Aladdin.

Having got to a knowledge of the facts and how the frauds were committed, Bessemer thought that he was able to appreciate the importance of any system of stamps that would prevent so great a loss to the Government; 'Nor did I,' says he, 'for one mo-

ment doubt that the Government would amply reward me if I were successful in so doing ;' and thus would most persons, not knowing H.M. Government, also think.

After some months of study and experiment, which he cheerfully undertook, although it interfered considerably with the pursuit of the business by which he lived, inasmuch as it was necessary to carry on the experiments in the strictest secrecy, and at night, at length he succeeded in making his stamp. He knew nothing then, he said, of patents ; and if he had for a moment have thought it necessary to make any preliminary conditions with the Government of his native country, he would at once have scouted the idea as utterly unworthy. He lives to know better ; but in his then confidence he wended his way one morning to Somerset House, and was ushered into the presence of the chief, Sir Charles Presley. Sir Charles told him that the office reckoned the loss by the frauds then perpetrated as being not less than one hundred thousand pounds per annum.

Sir Charles Presley was very much astonished at what Bessemer had shown and communicated, and asked him to call again in a few days. This he did, and Sir Charles suggested that he should work out the principle of his invention more fully, which Bessemer was very glad to do. He then produced the first perforating stamp, now so common, which could not be transferred by fraud. The design gave great satisfaction to Sir Charles Presley and his brethren, and everything went on smoothly. Sir Charles consulted Lord Althorp, and the Stamp Office authorities determined to adopt it.

Bessemer was then asked if, instead of receiving a sum of money

from the Treasury, he would be satisfied with the position of Superintendent of Stamps at some 600*l.* or 800*l.* per annum. All this showed that great care and love of economy of the first Reform Ministry, and all ministries, Tory and Liberal ; but in truth they preferred the salary, because, had they proposed to the House of Commons the payment of a sum of 5000*l.* down to save 100,000*l.* or more yearly, their Tory opponents, in their turn, would have duly commented on the scandalous waste of public money. The proposed appointment was, however, all that he could desire, and, in the simplicity of his heart, great was his rejoicing over the prospect before him ; for he was at that time engaged to be married, and his future position in life seemed thus assured.

Our lady-readers will now see that our view of these events is correct ; for here we come to the lady of the knight's love, and some of them may think of the career of the beloved of a great inventor or real man of science. How much must be her satisfaction to find as years go on the growing glory of her husband, which casts lustre on her and on their children ! Even a young lady will cease to grudge the evenings to be taken away from parties and from trifles for nobler pursuits ; nay, even the nights, which, as Bessemer said, 'must sometimes be devoted to produce that which shall shine forth in the bright blaze of many a day.' Henry Bessemer's betrothed, who was the sole confidante of his high endeavours, might well picture all these things to herself, and how, in after-years, she would share in his titles, and lean on the arm of him who was covered with the ensigns of honour his grateful country would bestow. She

might think she would be invited to great gatherings, to state balls, and to state concerts with him. The fate of such a woman, who has been the sharer in her husband's anxieties, and oftentimes his helpmate in his labours, is in after-times to share in his disappointments, to feel more than he does the slights inflicted on him, to know him deprived of the reward of his own labours, and to find those who have profited by them basking in the sunshine.

As Bessemer narrates, a few days after what he deemed was the great success of their lives, he called on the young lady to whom he was engaged, and showed her the new stamp. She, who with woman's quickness had learned to watch each detail like himself, said, 'Yes, I understand this; but surely, if all stamps had a date put upon them, they could not at a future time be used again without detection.' This was indeed a new light, and as he owned greatly startled him; but he at the time told her the steel dies used for the purpose could have but one date engraved upon them. After a little consideration he saw that movable dates were by no means impossible, so he effected this; and he saw clearly that this plan would be most simple and efficient, far better than the elaborate scheme he had devised. He could not but confess that 'while he felt pleased and proud of the clever and simple suggestion of the young lady, he saw also that all his more elaborate system, the result of months of toil, was shattered to pieces by it.'

It was not unnatural that he feared to disturb the decision Sir Charles Presley had come to; but with his strong conviction of the advantages of the new plan he felt in honour bound not to suppress it, whatever might be the

result. Thus it was that he soon found himself again closeted with Sir Charles at Somerset House, discussing the new scheme, which Sir Charles much preferred, because, as he said, all the old dies, old presses, and old workmen could be employed, and there would be but little change in the office, so little in fact that no new superintendent of stamps was required. So, after due consideration, Mr. Bessemer's first plan was definitively abandoned, the new one adopted, and in six or eight weeks an Act of Parliament was passed to carry it out.

During all the bustle of this great change, which, in the inventor's lifetime even to now, has saved at least five millions of money, and for anything we know even ten millions or more, no steps had been taken to instal him in office. Lord Althorp had resigned, and, as Bessemer says, no one seemed to have authority to do anything for him. In his own words, all sorts of half promises and excuses, or, in other terms, lies, followed each other, with long delays between, and he gradually saw the whole thing sliding out of his grasp. The fruit of his trustfulness was this—that he could not go to law, even if he wished to do so; for he was reminded by one of the imps of romance, the lawyer to the Stamp Office, when he pressed for mere money out of pocket, that he had done all the work voluntarily, and of his own accord. The fact that the Stamp Office was profiting by his toil and outlay weighed not the least with lawyers and officials, but they added mockery and insult to injury.

Wearied and disgusted he at length ceased to waste time in calling at the Stamp Office. He was made of sterner stuff than to give way to this grievous disap-

pointment, and in those days, the time, of which he had bestowed nine months on the service of H.M. Government, besides toil and expenditure, was precious to him, and he felt that nothing but increased exertions could make up for the loss. Thus, sad and dispirited, and with a burning sense of injustice overpowering all other feelings, he went his way from the Stamp Office, too proud to ask as a favour what was indubitably his just right, and sought consolation with that true heart with which his life has been shared.

Though nearly half a century has since elapsed, neither H.M. Government, on either side of politics, nor the six hundred and fifty members of the Legislature have ever felt their consciences stirred to pay him one shilling or give him any acknowledgment. On the contrary, he has had more than one adventure with H.M. Government, on which, in the liberal spirit of chivalry, he has bestowed more than one boon, reaping no reward but insolence and ingratitude.

The boy beginning life had learned one lesson, which had become a necessity for his good. He kept his embossing process to himself, and to this day the secret has been carefully guarded. Further, he invented at an after-time another process of great value in the arts, which reduced the price of an article much used. This too he determined to keep a secret; so he devised that the essential part of the manufacture should be conducted by self-acting machinery, to which no one should have access but himself. Thus, while in the outer part any common workman could be employed, he prepared an inner department. For this, having planned the machinery, he had the several

parts made in three or four establishments, and when they were delivered on the premises he fitted them up with one relative privately at night.

This is one of the most remarkable incidents in the annals of industry—the fast-locked chamber, holding within its unseen and mysterious monster at work by day or by night, while the mechanics who laboured without its door, and looked on it, could not penetrate within. Even the eldest son of Mr. Bessemer had reached manhood before he ever went within the forbidden chamber or held its key.

The materials were cheap, the demand for the manufactured article steady, and a high price for it has been maintained, from which Mr. Bessemer has realised a handsome fortune, though small in comparison with the earnings of his greater inventions.

It will have been noticed that even a man so liberal has felt it useful to his interests to conceal two inventions from the public. This is a not uncommon practice; for the Patent Laws protect the lawyers rather than the inventors, and turn the hard earnings of honest industry into the coffers of these pests of the commonwealth. A great invention has too many times brought nothing but ruin to its originator; and he who escapes the meshes of the law owes it rather to his luck than to any operation of justice, law and justice having no necessary connection. It was but a few days ago a case was recorded, in which a patent for an explosive largely used in mining industry, having been declared valid by a court of law, was by a higher court of law declared invalid, because the unlearned judges did not understand how they could manufacture blasting powder under the speci-

fication. Luckily the highest court decided for the validity of the patent, inasmuch as practical men had tested it, where lawyers had undertaken to manufacture what they did not understand.

A chemical process which can be worked as a secret is never disclosed; for the moment it is known, patent or no patent, every rascal can undersell the inventor, and is abetted by the courts of law in so doing, besides the unfair competition to which he is subjected by the foreign pirate. The consequence is serious prejudice to public interests; for invention is the fruitful mother of invention, and the practical knowledge of such secret processes would afford an example for other valuable applications.

Indeed, in England the action of the Government, as representing the community, is most unfavourable to the inventor and man of science. As the main body of society are not inventive and are not engaged in original research, they do not experience the action in their own personal fortunes. On the contrary, they do not conceive what really takes place, because so many and so distinguished are the noble acts of individuals in England that we never contemplate there can be anything wrong or rotten in our constitution. By a noble discovery or a great improvement we not only experience some actual benefit, but we all feel proud of the lustre thrown on our country. Such being our feeling, we naturally think that the public authorities, as representing us, do what is right towards those who have rendered services to all. We believe, without looking closely, that our representatives or salaried officers gladly render every help from the public resources in aid of meritorious labours, nor can we

doubt that rewards profusely distributed to some must also reach the right men.

Strangely enough, such is not the real working of our institutions; and without any covert intentions to that end, the man of merit becomes exposed to all that the ignorance, neglect, envy, jealousy, chicanery, and jobbery of mean minds can effect. It is not that the majority of our public men are so influenced; but there is a strange apathy, and for want of direct intervention their subordinates are allowed to act a most malevolent part. The experiences of Mr. Bessemer show that the participation of great men in the Government did not obtain for him justice, gratitude, or fair play. Indeed, many of our departments are notorious for their conduct. The Admiralty has always been a laggard behind the merchant service in the adoption of improvement. It last of all took up chain cables, iron rigging, steam-engines, screw-propellers, and iron hulls. As to the Ordnance Department, from that it has ever been almost impossible to obtain justice, and so throughout. Even if one officer does a friendly turn, his rival or successor—and his successor is most commonly his rival—upsets all that has been done.

Hence, if a young man is either of meaner parts or wanting in the noble characteristics of a great man, early in life he arrives at a decision to follow a safer course. If, instead of distinguishing himself as a scholar, he will apply himself to teach little boys Latin grammar, he may get stipends of from four hundred to a thousand a year, and look forward to a head-mastership with seven thousand. Whether the boys learn is another story. A professor is always better paid than a philosopher, and

many a great man must waste valuable time in the drudgery of teaching boys and lads, in order to earn a livelihood. Much of the great work of science in all branches is done by unpaid labour, at the expense and outlay of the student himself; and should any rare public appointment fall vacant in his branch, so far from getting it, he will find that it is given to some German *protégé* of the Court, or to some partisan jobber. The statistical departments have been disorganised for years through a writer of political articles receiving the honours and emoluments of the direction.

Bessemer says it appears strange that he should for so many years have remained silent under the unjust treatment he had received from the Stamp Office; for these facts were only made public this very year of 1879, and so late that few beyond himself and his wife are alive to authenticate them. The fact was, that besides the time unprofitably devoted for several months to the Government service, and the cost even of the dies and of the experiments he had made not having been paid for by the Government, he was well-nigh ruined on the very threshold of life. Thus it became impossible for him to take the necessary steps to force his legal claims against the Government, and in which he would have found very great difficulties in the protection insured to the prerogative of the Crown. Indeed, all his energy was necessary to recover lost ground; and he became more immersed in business, and one invention rapidly succeeded another, and happily brought with them a rich return. Thus, deeply engrossed in new undertakings, he had no time and but little inclination to re-open what he justly calls this bitterly

vexatious subject with the Stamp Office. He was, however, destined to come again in contact with his ancient enemies of H.M. Government in more than one way, but in all equally unsatisfactory to him. At the time of the Crimean war he had invented a mode of firing elongated projectiles from a smooth-bore gun, the rotation necessary to insure their proper position during flight being obtained without rifling the gun, consequently rendering all smooth-bore guns at once suitable for firing elongated shot and shell. Notwithstanding the treatment he had received, as an Englishman it was a matter of course with him to offer this plan to our Government; but though it came from a man then an accredited inventor and engineer, almost as a matter of course it was discarded without a trial.

Being shortly after in Paris at a dinner, Bessemer met Prince Napoleon, and in conversation told him of his plan for utilising smoothbore guns. The Prince was so impressed with the importance of this idea that he said he was sure his cousin, the Emperor, would be much pleased if Bessemer would explain his invention to him, and that he would get an appointment made with the Emperor for that purpose. This was done, and Bessemer had a long and most interesting discussion with the Emperor, whom he naturally found thoroughly conversant with the whole subject of artillery.

The despot of France in the freest manner gave him *carte blanche* to make any experiments he desired at the Government establishment of Vincennes. Soon after, however, finding his presence was much required in London, he obtained another audience of the Emperor, and asked leave to make

the experimental projectiles in London, and to bring them over to Paris for trial. To this the Emperor readily acceded, and as he was leaving the audience chamber, he said, 'In this case you will be put to some expense, but I will have that seen to.' Fancy Sir Charles Presley and his brethren saying anything of this kind! The French Emperor, however, did not need to be reminded; for a few days after Bessemer's return to London he received a letter from the Duke of Bassano, enclosing an autograph note from the Emperor, giving a credit on Messrs. Baring Brothers for cost of manufacturing projectiles, but without naming the amount, leaving it absolutely to the discretion of Bessemer, in full reliance on his honour. What would my Lords of the Treasury or the Audit Office have said to such a document as this? And yet this is what a private firm in London would have done, Messrs. Baring Brothers themselves, in like circumstances. Twenty years after the Peninsular war the great victor Wellington was made to pay five thousand pounds by the Audit Office for an account of the war, for which there was not a technical voucher. Bessemer made a great many projectiles, which were tried in his presence at the Polygon at Vincennes, a few days before New Year's-day with six inches of snow on the ground, which enabled them readily to find the projectiles on their passing through the targets. The course of these experiments was very interesting, and in them Bessemer displayed great ingenuity. He did not neglect the opportunity of proving that the confident tone in which his system had been condemned at Woolwich was entirely misplaced.

The gun used for these experi-

ments was only a light cast-iron one, and Commander Minnie, to whom the conduct of the experiments was intrusted, said, 'Yes, the shots rotate properly; but if we cannot get something stronger for our guns, these heavy projectiles will be of little service.' At that time the projectiles were 30-pounders fired from a 12-pounder gun. The casual observation was the spark that has kindled one of the greatest industrial revolutions which the present century has yet to record; for it forced on Bessemer the idea that the improvement of iron for guns was a subject well worth investigation, and held out promises of important results. When iron guns were first cast at the Carron Works in Scotland in the last century, the business was a very small one, and it must not be omitted that H.M.'s Government of that time did not forget to put impediments in their way. When Bessemer reported to the Emperor a few days later the result of the Vincennes experiments, he said that he had made up his mind to study the whole subject of metals specially suitable for artillery purposes. This proposal the Emperor encouraged with many kind expressions, and a desire that he might be informed of the results arrived at.

It will be of interest to the reader to learn that, according to Bessemer's statement, his knowledge of iron metallurgy was at that time very limited, so that he had to get up the whole of the subject. He is now, however, of opinion that his ignorance proved of great advantage to him, as he had very little to unlearn, and could thus approach the subject free from the bias inseparable from those who have long followed a beaten track and vainly endeavour to get out of the rut. These

words of Bessemer require, however, to be carefully considered. He does not imply that a state of ignorance would enable him to invent as many schemers imagine, who put forth crude ideas which are crushed by practical men. He set to work to learn the whole business thoroughly, first from books and then in the foundries. Still it will be seen that here was a man well on in the world, who set himself to hard learning, while many of us think that we can do very well without learning at all, or without learning any more.

To the public who thus get details at first hand, it is also of interest to know that, having built a small experimental iron-works in St. Pancras, and begun his preliminary trials, months rolled on, and he spared neither labour nor money, but made failure after failure. To the wise man, however, failure is a way of learning, and failures are carefully recorded, first, because they show us the way how to save our time by not trying the failure over again; secondly, because they show us, through narrowing the field, in what way we must try; and thirdly, because they in themselves often suggest some further experiment. Bessemer, indeed, says that during this long time of failure he was accumulating many important facts which could not but ultimately be of value to him.

Thus by slow degrees the truth began to dawn upon him; and at the end of about a year he had considerably improved the quality of cast iron, and had then cast a small model gun, which he turned and bored. The metal was almost as white as steel, and was very much tougher and stronger than the best cast iron then in use for artillery purposes. This small gun he took to Paris, and presented to his friend the Emperor, as

the first-fruits of his practical studies in iron metallurgy. He says he shall ever remember with respect and gratitude the Emperor's kindly expressions when accepting it. It is a thing to ponder on that a usurper should be thus regarded, while the government of a free country heaps on itself contempt and hostility. It may be that, where party government prevails, principle is little regarded, while despotism must secure itself against public opinion. The only decent English Government perhaps that ever existed, except the Commonwealth, was that of the company of merchants which ruled the East Indies, but that was in truth a despotism. As to the United States, they are not worse than the mother country; for this year, by a party vote, they have displaced one of the finest scientific establishments they have to boast of. Under a free government national vanity may sometimes foster a noble design, but the fears of the despot keep his conscience in a tenderer state.

On his return from Paris, Bessemer followed up his experiments with greater ardour than ever, for he became convinced he was on the eve of producing the quality of metal more suitable than any other. Furnace after furnace was pulled down and rebuilt, new and improved machinery and apparatus were invented and constructed at a great expense, and several new patents were taken out, so as to secure each step in advance. Thus even the then handsome resources of Bessemer were weakened by these prolonged and fearfully expensive experiments, which were by this time necessarily conducted on a manufacturing scale, but without return, and not as mere laboratory experiments. He and his wife

saw the results of their past years' labour going in this way, and that they were returning to an earlier condition of their lives. They bore it, however, cheerfully, for Bessemer now saw the great fact that the refinement of iron in the fluid state might go on until pure malleable iron or steel could be obtained. He had thereby got to a further stage, for he knew that such a result in its importance went infinitely beyond that for which he had been striving, an ordnance metal.

How many a squire will spend on a pack of hounds or on a stud of race-horses, and how will a bankrupt duchess bestow on an evening entertainment to a crowd of idlers for which not a wreck will be found on the morrow, sums which in any department of science would yield results of lasting utility. Here, however, were a man and his wife—for the wife had been partner in every toil of life—bestowing their earnings and savings on what was for the good of their country, but might yield them no more than a ball does to a duchess, perhaps only faded flowers and the memory of regret.

At this time of his life Mr. Bessemer devoted himself exclusively to his iron experiments, and had greatly neglected his professional business for some two years and a half. Although he had a valued partner, Mr. Robert Longsdon, he considered the state of business was not fair and he offered to withdraw altogether from the partnership, or to give him a share of a fifth of the new patents. Fortunately for Mr. Longsdon he was as free-minded as Mr. Bessemer, and he took the well-meant offer. Meanwhile Bessemer went on; and in August 1856 he felt justified in reading a paper before the British

Association 'on the manufacture of malleable iron and steel without fuel.'

The whole iron trade of England was startled by the facts set forth in this paper, backed by samples of the work. Many of the leading men in the iron trade came up forthwith to London in great haste, fearing he might make some exclusive bargains with a few firms for the working of his invention. With a full knowledge that as yet there had been no commercial working of the process, yet as a sort of insurance against a possible monopoly, they took licenses on the favourable terms then offered. Thus no less than 27,000*l.* was brought in within thirty days of his reading his paper at Cheltenham. These licenses Bessemer afterwards bought back for 31,500*l.*, giving fresh licenses in their stead.

The consequences of this eagerness were very noteworthy: numerous temporary experimental trials were made in different parts of the country with various qualities of pig-iron, showing that most of them could not be successfully worked with the new process. No sooner was this found out than an extraordinary revulsion of feeling showed itself in the iron-trade, and perfect distrust of the invention became universal. The public press, which had at first spoken of it in such glowing terms, now doomed it as impracticable, and spoke of it as 'a brilliant meteor that had flitted across the metallurgical horizon, dazzling a few enthusiasts, and then vanishing for ever in total darkness.'

Although Bessemer knew he was in the right way, he knew too this was no time to argue the question with the iron-masters; words were of no avail, so he set earnestly to work to try and overcome the difficulty which had so

unexpectedly arisen, and that was no easy task. All the old investigations had to be gone over again, experiments had to be made on a much larger scale, with greater and more powerful machinery. To add to the trouble, as the difficulties had reference more to chemical than to mechanical questions, so a laboratory was fitted up, and the services of a professor of chemistry were engaged at a high salary.

Mr. Bessemer owns that the very large scale on which these operations were carried out involved a very heavy outlay in various ways; but there was no slackening of exertion, no cessation of the severe mental and bodily labour. In this way another long and weary year had passed, and but little real progress had been made towards the removal of the difficulty. Many new paths had been struck out, but they had led to no practical results.

He worked steadily on. Six months more of anxious toil had glided away, and things were much in the same state, except that many thousands of pounds had been uselessly spent, and he was much worn by hard work and mental anxiety. The time had now come, to use his own words, when the large fortune that was almost within his grasp seemed then far off. His name as an engineer and inventor had suffered much by the defeat of his plans. His best friends tried, first by gentle hints, and then by stronger arguments, to make him desist from a pursuit that all the world had proclaimed to be utterly impossible. He owns it was a hard struggle, and he had well-nigh learned to distrust himself, and was fain at times to surrender his own convictions to the mere opinion of others. Those most near and dear to him at

length grieved over his obstinate persistence; but, as he says, what else could he do, for he had irrefragable evidence of the absolute truth and soundness of the principle on which his invention was based. With this knowledge he could not persuade himself to fling away the promise of wealth and fame, and lose entirely the results of years of labour and mental anxiety, and at the same time own himself to be beaten and defeated.

His courage held on, and happily for him the end was near; and in a few more months he had fully succeeded in producing steel worth 50*l.* to 60*l.* per ton from charcoal pig-iron, which had cost him only 7*l.* per ton; the conversion of the crude iron into steel being effected by simply forcing minute streams of cold atmospheric air through it for the space of fifteen minutes—so plain was the ultimate process after years of toil. Thus was he able to boast that the so-called fallacious dream of the enthusiast had been realised to its fullest extent, and it was now his turn to triumph over those who had so confidently foretold his failure. He could then see in his mind's eye, at a glance, the great iron industry of the world crumbling away under the irresistible force of the facts so recently elicited. The ingenuity and skill of a hundred and fifty years in building up the English iron trade were as naught; for homogeneous steel was to become the material for the construction of our ships and our guns, our viaducts and our bridges, our railways and our locomotives, and the thousand and one things for which iron had theretofore been employed.

He straightway took a few hundredweight of these new steel bars to the works of his friends, the Galloways, at Manchester, and

unknown to their workpeople these bars were given out for all the purposes for which steel had been used. So identical was the new steel, that during two months the workmen had not the smallest suspicion they were not using steel of the best mark, costing 60*l.* per ton.

Even after this not one of the large steel manufacturers of Sheffield would willingly adopt his process, though each one was ready to accept for himself an absolute monopoly of the invention, and then perhaps have shut it up. Bessemer, who had foreseen this, was driven to set up steel works of his own in the midst of Sheffield, and to undersell them in their own market. Thus were established the first Bessemer steel works, open to the inspection of the manufacturers, and from which steel was produced and sold 10*l.* to 15*l.* per ton below their prices. It is not unnatural that Bessemer should congratulate himself and his new partners on having escaped rattening with a bottle of gunpowder in the furnace-flues, for which Sheffield men have made themselves so disgracefully known. The reason he gives is the absolute disbelief of both masters and men that Bessemer could compete with them. It was this disbelief, however, that in the end lost Sheffield its old monopoly of the steel trade of the country, for the process was adopted in all the great iron districts.

Fourteen years afterwards these experimental works were sold for exactly twenty-four times the whole subscribed capital of the firm, after returning fifty-seven fold. Therefore the whole return in fourteen years was eighty fold, or cent per cent every two months, more than a gigantic Californian silver mine.

His old acquaintances in the Government were kept fully in-

formed of what he was about; for the late Colonel (afterwards General) Eardley Wilmot visited Sheffield on their behalf, and made himself master of the process. So far as he was concerned, he always behaved straightforward.

In May 1859 Bessemer read a paper on his invention at the Institution of Civil Engineers. By this time the process had spread into Sweden and France.

Woolwich, however, held to its reputation of the enemy of inventors. In consequence of an experiment there, the success of which could not be denied, Bessemer was requested to send in a tender and estimate for the cost of the necessary converting apparatus for making steel for ordnance at a cost of 6*l.* or 7*l.* per ton. One of the usual changes at Woolwich took place—Colonel Wilmot was superseded.

Bessemer finding matters going wrong appealed to the late Mr. Sidney Herbert, who at length very coolly stated that he had consulted Mr. W. G. Armstrong, who had said Bessemer's iron was wholly unsuited for the purpose. Is it to be wondered at that Bessemer could hardly believe his own ears; Mr. Armstrong being the proposer of a rival scheme for making guns of coiled iron bars; and the two methods of forming the gun not being able to bear comparison, still less a competitive trial? Bessemer thinks that the Newcastle manufacturer well provided for his own interest in the advice he gave, for he was at once promoted to office with a large salary, and honoured by knighthood at the outset in 1859, receiving the profits of large orders executed for Government at his own works at Newcastle.

Bessemer of course was not knighted, and Sir William Arm-

strong was forced to adopt steel for the foundation and core on which his gun was built. This was a practical answer to the affirmation that steel was wholly unsuited for Woolwich purposes.

Undismayed by this proceeding and encouraged by the adoption of his process by Sir John Brown of Sheffield, Sir Joseph Whitworth, the great German engineer Mr. Krupp, and others, Bessemer prepared at the great Exhibition of 1862 to show its applicability to all purposes of iron or steel. It may be mentioned that what is called Whitworth steel is made by the Bessemer system. During the Exhibition the late Mr. Platt, M.P., of Oldham, offered Bessemer 50,000*l.* for a fifth-part of his patents as a sum down. Bessemer, desirous of securing himself, accepted this, and so far as we can make out Mr. Platt and his partners must have received at least a quarter of a million for their fifth.

At the Exhibition of Paris of 1867, Bessemer, out of delicacy to the French manufacturers, who had adopted his system, declined to exhibit any article of his own manufacture. Notwithstanding his not being an exhibitor, the French Commissioners reported to the Emperor that the great progress of the iron manufacture in the preceding ten years was due to the persevering efforts of the English engineer. The Emperor had not forgotten his friend and the old experiments, and he expressed his intention to confer on Bessemer the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. Unluckily he put a usual condition, that the consent of the English Government should be given.

Mr. Bessemer made the necessary application to the English Ambassador in Paris, by whom permission was at once refused,

and so was a second application. Thus not only did H.M. Government neglect to confer honours on Bessemer, but stood in the way of others rewarding him. It is strange the French Emperor should have allowed himself to be so thwarted. At the previous Exhibition the French Government had expressed its intention to offer the Legion of Honour to the English exhibitors as to the others; but Prince Napoleon was surprised to find the odd attitude taken by the English Government, for he was aware they conferred decorations on people of their own destitute of any merit. He, however, took the opinion of an English man of science then in Paris, who told him that if the Legion of Honour were given to the English it would be accepted. The distribution accordingly took place, when some of the English in their cunning carried their crosses to the Ambassador, and asked if they could wear them. He good-naturedly told them not to inquire of him, and they have worn their decorations to this day. At the Exhibition of last year H.M. Government again attempted to prevent the English exhibitors from receiving the same rewards as the others, but were compelled to give way to public opinion. Some ridicule was attempted to be thrown upon the wearers; but surely it must be better for a manufacturer of warming-pans to receive the Legion of Honour than for a head-footman, or some one whose function at Court is little more than to carry a warming-pan, to be created C.B., K.C.B., or G.C.B., with the Cross of St. Michael and St. George in addition.

This gratuitous act of insult naturally revives in Bessemer's mind all the bitterness of the long-smothered wrongs inflicted

on him by the Government when he was but a defenceless boy. It is to the expression of these feelings that we owe the personal revelations of Mr. Bessemer's struggles with life, such as are rarely made known, and which offer a picture of so much interest. Often the life of a man of science presents no such incidents, but is confined to a dry list of his works or his discoveries.

However, the great inventor could afford to look with contempt on his pitiful adversaries. From the period of the French Exhibition his process rapidly spread throughout Europe and America, and it is wonderful to contemplate its growth. At the time of his invention, the whole make of cast steel in England with all the advantages of Heath's process was only about 50,000 tons yearly, at prices ranging from 50*l.* to 60*l.* per ton. This price was prohibitory for all structural purposes, for which, besides, the brittle nature of what was then known as cast steel made it unsuitable.

Mr. Bessemer remembers that when he first proposed steel for use as rails to Mr. Ramsbottom, then engineer of the London and North-Western Railway, the latter asked, in a fierce tone, if Bessemer wanted him tried for manslaughter. Now steel rails are being laid throughout the world wherever iron rails are worn out, at less than the original cost of these.

In 1877, notwithstanding the depressions of trade, the manufacture of Bessemer steel here was not less than 750,000 tons, at a cost of about 10*l.* per ton. Thus the make had grown fifteen-fold in a limited interval. The cost of the 50,000 tons was 2,500,000*l.* and of fifteen times as much only threefold that sum. What is of no less moment in a national

point of view is, that while we are able to use such a greatly increased amount of steel, the saving in coals as against the old Sheffield process was equal to 3,500,000 tons, or coals for the household consumption of as many people.

Abroad, the use of Bessemer steel has become proportionally great. In the United States it is 525,000 tons, in Belgium 70,000 tons, in Germany 260,000 tons, in France 260,000 tons, in Sweden 20,000 tons, being in all a total make of nearly 2,000,000 tons of Bessemer metal. The price of steel rails is below 6*l.* per ton, and many an iron rail was laid at 10*l.*, 11*l.*, and 12*l.* Mr. Bessemer may feel proud that he has founded a manufacture that is now worth 20,000,000*l.* sterling yearly, and which before the end of his life may well reach 100,000,000*l.* It is not, however, by the money value that this great addition to the resources of the world by one man is to be estimated. The advantages are felt in many ways. Even in the steel rails the labour of one man on every two miles that was required for iron rails can be dispensed with. On the existing rails in England it is estimated there is a saving of a capital sum of 170,000,000*l.* There is also a saving on hundreds of thousands of steel tyres for engines and carriages, besides less danger.

In 1862 they began shipbuilding with Bessemer steel. Few will be surprised to learn that this made no impression whatever on the Lords of the Admiralty, so that many years were lost. Bessemer's steel anchors, invented in 1858, nearly a quarter of a century ago, are just coming into use.

At length honours began to come to Bessemer. In 1859 the Institution of Civil Engineers

awarded him the Gold Telford Medal. Besides admitting him to the Council, and showing their appreciation of him in many ways, in this year they publicly presented to him a splendid piece of gold plate, made by Hunt & Roskell. Ten years ago the Iron and Steel Institute elected him to be their President. About the same time the Society of Arts awarded him the Gold Albert Medal, though they yearned to give the medal to a foreigner. The President, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, to show more honour to the recipient, made the presentation at Marlborough House in the presence of the Council.

Mr. Bessemer makes the free avowal that, gratifying as these tributes were, he was no less delighted with those friends who have paid him 1,057,748*l.* golden sovereigns, not an unhandsome fortune apart from other earnings.

Abroad many honours were tendered to him, and some of them singular and such as Englishmen do not attain. He was elected an Honorary Member of the Iron Board of Sweden. The city of Hamburg bestowed on him its freedom in due form. The presentation of a gold medal from the King of Wurtemberg followed, together with a complimentary letter. The King of the Belgians is well known for the attentions he pays to men of learning, and on two occasions he drove over to Denmark Hill to have half an hour's conversation on the various important inventions. Mr. Bessemer's house at Denmark Hill is as remarkable for its associations as for its fine works of art. In the grounds he made at his own expense experiments on the plan for preventing seasickness on the Channel passage. Commercial difficulties, as is well known, in-

terfered with the realisation of this project.

H.M. Government was not able altogether to stop out Mr. Bessemer from receiving the rewards of his labour. The Emperor of Austria, having seen the process at work, felt it his duty to confer on him the title of Knight Commander of the Order of Francis Joseph. The Emperor did not trouble H.M. Government on this matter, but desired his own Ambassador to convey to Mr. Bessemer the collar and gold enamelled cross. This order confers the title of a gentleman, or what is called nobility, and we believe its holder, being otherwise qualified, can be created a Baron of the Empire. The Emperor of the French personally presented a massive gold medal bearing the great inventor's name. The Society of Arts of Berlin elected him an Honorary Member, and forwarded to him an address enclosed in an ebony and bronze casket.

Our brethren in the United States have no crosses and orders to bestow ; but they found a better way of showing their gratitude. These decorations will lose their significance, and honorary membership be forgotten ; but the Americans determined to perpetuate the name of their benefactor, not by planting a tree, but by planting a city. In Indiana a spot was chosen, fertile in resources, where a great centre of industry can be constituted, and to this they gave the name of Bessemer. It is a growing place, with a fine railway station, and its name already figures on all the maps of the State. Arctic navigators are sometimes envied for their prerogative of attaching names to ice-bound capes. Cook was more fortunate, for the names he gave are now of familiar note

in Australia and New Zealand ; but the city of Bessemer will, it is hoped, for ages commemorate him from whom it received its name.

Thus, endowed with fame, favoured by Fortune, covered with honours, and conscious of his deserving from the benefits he has conferred on the world, it will be well understood that he cannot still without repining look on the conduct of the Government of his native country, for which he has done so much. Even beyond the grave there will be tributes of gratitude to him : statues and monuments will be erected and medals struck. A man so generous is greedy of nothing ; but he cannot remember without pain how he has been treated by the Stamp Office, the War Department, the Foreign Office, and the Admiralty.

Undoubtedly there must be something wrong when no Premier or other Minister feels called upon to designate for testimonies of the national gratitude those who are national benefactors. No doubt some day an ironclad will receive the name of Bessemer, though perhaps first abroad, and posthumous honours will not be wanting. Posthumous honours avail but little in comparison with that recognition which the living man receives. As it is, in most cases that small guerdon, the Companionship of the Bath,

rightly awarded to a brave young captain, falls to a great man of science when he is threescore and ten, and when neither he nor his wife can venture out to the few evenings of celebration where fashion or fancy will allow him to wear it.

In the existing state of affairs men of science give their time, their abilities, and their money for the public good, rarely having the opportunity of obtaining a return, much less of making a fortune, as Mr. Bessemer has done. It is not they who are under obligations to the commonwealth, but the commonwealth to them ; and it is a very small thing that suitable honours, which do not even entail a charge on the purse of the Exchequer, should be tendered. Twenty years ago, at all events, Mr. Bessemer had earned them ; for twenty years he might have worn them ; and it is by no means creditable to us as a community that towards the national creditor we are thus far insolvent, bankrupt even of thanks.

An end will be put to the doubt in our readers' minds ; for, after all, the knightly title is borne by Sir Henry Bessemer. H.M. Government, ashamed of the exposure which has taken place, but too ungracious to make full reparation, have in these last days recommended the Queen thus to designate Henry Bessemer.

DAY-DREAMS.

DREAM that the golden summer
In winter hath no part ;
Dream that the skies are cloudless,
And light is every heart ;
Dream that the laugh of pleasure
Has never sigh of pain,
But endless is in measure,
As joys that come again.

Dream that the happy laughter
Of short and happy days
Has nothing to come after—
It lives, and living stays.
Dream that the sweet entrancing
Of words that now are bliss
Lives with each love-look glancing,
Thrills on with every kiss.

Dream on that love is deathless,
Dream on that hearts are true ;
For lips with sighing breathless
Still whisper it to you.
And sweet as Nature's summer
Is youth when youth is love,
Its summers are for ever,
Its emblem is the dove.

Alas, to ripened summer
Comes chill of autumn day !
And even sweet 'for ever'
May vow yet pass away.
The ripened grain has reapers,
The wine-vat mars the vine,
And half the world are weepers
For those same dreams of thine.

Across the golden meadows,
Beyond the ripened wheat,
Where half in happy shadows
The swaying branches meet,
You know he waits—your lover ;
And all the world around
Has nothing to recover,
For all you've lost is found.

O happy dreams and dreamer !
O happy days of youth !
Sweet seeming to the seemer
As only blissful truth !
No cloud upon the sunshine,
No shadow on the brow,
Life only sweet as love-time,
The time you dream of—now !

RITA.

THE BELLE OF SANTA CRUZ.

A 'Scrimmage' at Teneriffe.

How came it to pass that Teddy O'Grady and I, subalterns both in her Majesty's Dashers, stationed at Cape Town, found ourselves one November morning, in the year 184—, walking across the grand square of the city of Santa Cruz, Teneriffe, instead of being on the high seas, crowding all sail southward ho for Table Bay?

It occurred in this wise.

About three weeks before, we, with other passengers, had embarked at Gravesend on board the good ship Lady Floriline, John Forteith commander. A succession of heavy autumnal gales, during which her ladyship had behaved very badly, pitching and tossing, kicking and plunging, reeling and staggering, had driven us so much out of our course as to place us on a dark, dirty, and worse than ever stormy night, about one hundred miles to the northward of the Canary Islands.

Non sine lacrymis—not without *tares*, as O'Grady worded it—had we got even so far; for yards had been carried away, sails split and blown from bolt-ropes, cordage snapped, bulwarks stove in, the cutter lost, and dear old Forteith had been awfully riled, and had angrily desired Howard and Adams of the Rifles 'to stow all that chaff' when asked 'how many chips' of his Lady Floriline he expected to be left standing when he sighted the Cape lighthouse.

Indeed, matters did look as if little or nothing of the vessel was destined to enter Table Bay; for, on the night I have mentioned, and while a regular hurricane was

blowing, something or other aloft gave way, her ladyship 'broached to,' took a header down to the very bottom of Davy Jones's locker, remained for a moment or two buried in that maritime locality, then rose up with her bowsprit broken and dangling about her stern, and the *décollété* female figure, glass and tooth-brush in hand, which represented the damsel after whom she had been named, swept from her bows and gone to grace the statue gallery of some sea-god.

A little while, thus tattered and torn, she hesitates what next acrobatic feat to perform. Then—w-h-i-s-h! s-p-l-a-s-h!—she makes another plunge fathoms below the waves; crack! over topples the foremast; snap! away goes the maintopmast, and presently every yard, sail, and rope stretched on these spars is either thrashing and lashing alongside, or madly swinging and swaying overhead. Well, we had to work with a will all that livelong night to cut the wreck adrift; and when the last strand was severed, and the carpenter reported that hull and rudder were 'as sound as a bell,' we set about rigging jury-masts, and shaped a course for Teneriffe. After some days of watchful 'conning,' of gingerly 'pulling and hauling,' of careful minding 'of luffs and weather-helms,' and of keeping of ever so many 'bright looks-out'—for we were wonderfully and curiously fashioned, and Lady F.'s impromptu sea toilet would not stand much rough handling—we wriggled, one fore-

noon, into the lovely roadstead of Santa Cruz, and anchored opposite the old historic town. Then, so soon as Don Fernando de Castoroilo, the health officer, had given us *pratique*, O'Grady and I were over the ship's side, had landed at the Mole, and, as I began by saying, were walking across the square on our way to Dickson's hotel.

Not many minutes did it take us to find that comfortable caravanserai, still less to get established in its *salle-à-manger*, and in a composite language of Latin, French, and Irish—O'Grady's native tongue—to give our orders for ollas, pucheros—all sorts and descriptions of Spanish dishes—to an olive-complexioned buxom *dame-de-comptoir*; but who, alas, even across a pretty wide buffet, was at once accredited with the perfume of garlic and tobacco.

Now, as Captain Forteith had told us that his carpenter and half a dozen lubberly shipwrights he had got would take fully three weeks to make the Lady Floriline shipshape and ready again for sea, there was nothing to be done for that time but to make ourselves at home in Santa Cruz; to lionise the island; to ascend its peak; to see its vine- and olive-yards; to visit its old cities of the Guaniches; and to fraternise—as much as they would let us—with the cloaked and sombreroed señors, and with the bewitching mantilla-draped, head-veiled, and fan-armed señoras—the lords and ladies of the land.

And a piquant attractive set were the feminines generally, walking with a springy Oaks-filly kind of step, such as they say no women but Spanish move with, and throwing about their eyes and their fans in a way that no other daughters of Eve can,

or do, rival them—so much the better, perhaps.

They'll tell you, these Castilian dames and damsels, that from earliest days of childhood anxious mamma has taught them to amble thus in their gait; has shown them how to open and shut and whirl and twirl their fans, making these pieces of stick and painted paper organs of speech and organs of sight; and that when they have mastered these accomplishments, and learnt to sing love-songs to the strumming of a ribbon-decked guitar, then the educational course of Dolores, Juanita, or Christobel is completed, and that she may 'go in and win.' Add, however, to the curriculum the smoking of cigarettes, the drinking of over-sweet spice-flavoured chocolate, and the rather too free indulgence in pungent esculents—ugh!—and we found the young lady perfect.

However, spite of non-aromatic herbs and strong nicotine, we managed to hit it off pleasantly enough with the pretty señoras and señoritas, who took kindly to 'los oficiales Ingleses,' possibly as a pleasant change from their every-day stereotyped admirers. But the dons and hidalgos—their male belongings—hated the very sight of us; and although assuring us, after the manner of the country, that their houses and contents were at our disposal, that they kissed our hands and feet, that they hoped we might live a thousand years, and so on, were wishing us all the time at Jericho, in the Red Sea, anywhere rather than parading the streets and strands of Santa Cruz, and lounging in the saloons and gardens of their large moresco-looking, but somewhat dilapidated, houses—Dolores, Christobel, or Juanita aforesaid being then and there our companions.

'Be jabus,' says O'Grady one day, 'a moighty proud set of spalpeens these oisland dons, but as poor as a Dooblin keyarman. Why, look ye, there's that Don Pedro de Povero Diabolo, the man we see wid oight or noine paces of ribbun tacked on his coat, the Intendente Militario they call him, the husband, ye moinde, of that noice leetle señora you've now and agen sain me walking on the Meerena wid. Whoy, the beggar has ounly four or foive doubloons the month, a mather of some twelve or fifteen pounds; and as for the casa [house] which he is always putting *a la disposicion de ustedes*—at our deesposal—bedad! tree auld cheers, a squeer table, a sleep of keyarpet on a polished flure, and hoigh-back rickety sofa of the toime of Coloombus, and on which Inez and he can't seet widout squazing; begorrah, that's all, or narely all, the foorniture oi've sain in the house for use or for show!'

Now this Don Pedro to whom O'Grady alluded was no end of a Teneriffe swell, his impecuniosity notwithstanding. He was a knight of Saint Fernando, of Isabella, of Calatrava, of goodness only knows what besides; he had the blue blood of Castille's best grandees circulating in his veins; and although past the sixties in age, and well into 'the sere and yellow leaf,' was as frisky and peppery as the youngest sub in the King of Spain's army. *Au reste*, he was a wizened, sapless, tobacco-dried-up old soldier, of whom you never saw more than his forage-cap, thin colourless face, and his boots, the rest of his person being always enveloped in his large military regulation cloak. Inez, his wife—the blooming May to this faded December—was about twenty, slight, graceful, fairer than most of her country-

women, with large, black, sparkling eyes, a rosy laughing mouth, pearly teeth (Havannahs notwithstanding), and a glorious profusion of glossy jet hair crowning a head which no other coif than a lace veil, fastened by a high tortoiseshell comb, was ever permitted to cover. Admittedly she was the belle and beauty of Santa Cruz—for even that spiteful old harridan Donna Isabella de Muchos Malos Palabres said so—and the pet name she went by was La Hermosa, Inez the Beautiful. There were eyes and eyes, and there were fans and fans, in the city and suburbs of that island; but Inez distanced all her skilled compeers in the use and abuse of both. When she sent a bright sidelong glance out of those large flashing optics, let a word or two fall from those ruby lips, dimpled that lovely face of hers with an arch smile, and waved and whirled, furred and unfurled, the air-producing little whirligig she held in her jewelled hand—pop! bang!—down dropped the spoil at which this mitrailleuse of artillery had been directed, as if it had been knocked over by a Martini-Henry rifle. Howard, Adams, your humble servant, all of us were more or less hurt by random shots; but dear old Teddy O'Grady, he felt them hottest and hardest; and La Hermosa, knowing this, kept on firing and firing without mercy, and riddled him to pieces. So down he fell; and being a hot and impetuous Galway man, it was as much as I could do to keep him from getting foul of old Pedro, hurling him over the precipices of the 'pake,' pitching him into the 'say,' 'spificating the villen,' and in point of fact from committing some threatened act of violence that would rid him of the Intendente, and leave his wife a 'widder.' He was 'clane gone

anent that colleen,' he said. 'The left soide of me body is as wake as wather-ghruel,' he sung; and he vowed 'he'd be the death of the "pra-Adamite" husband—auld Meetoosalah Pedro—he would!'

But notwithstanding these menaces the Don walked in peace, and took matters very quietly. He did not appear to notice O'Grady's predilections, or to dispute his pretty *cara sposa's* right to an open flirtation; 'they all do it,' so why not his better-half? He still puffed away at his principles and regalias, still smothered himself in his roquelaure, still treated my friend with the greatest politeness and courtesy, and was still always placing the 'tree auld cheers' and 'the sleep of key-arpel' at his service.

Well, one night there was a *fête* at the palace of the Governor, El Conde de Pocos Pesos. His excellency gave us lots of good music from the military bands of the garrison; lots of brilliant light from his country-pressed oil; lots of grapes, oranges, dates, and figs from the gardens hard by; lots of sour Canary wine; but little—precious little—in the way of substantial meats and drinks. It could not be called a ruinous entertainment, and probably cost the Count three or four dollars good and lawful coin of Spain. We soon got wearied of the whole affair, O'Grady especially; for although Don Pedro, without the everlasting capote, splendacious in all the bravery of his best uniform and multitudinous stars and crosses, was well to the front, Inez the Beautiful did not show. Fandangos, boleros, cachuchas, waltzes, had no charm for him,—O'Grady of course I mean. He passed by flashing eyes without a glance at their lustre. He disregarded the *buenas noches*, and other polite salutations of

many a fascinating maid. He ruthlessly crushed against dainty natural and artificial feminine configurations without regard to disarrangement or physical suffering. He scratched with the heavy bullion of his epaulettes the nude arms and shoulders of delicately cuticled brunettes without a word of apologetic sorrow; and he dug his spurred heels—he was our adjutant—into the skirts and shapely ankles of matrons and maids, and tore flounces and flesh without so much as asking pardon for the injuries. More than all, he aroused the indignation of Madam the Countess of Pocos Pesos—the great captain's captain—by leaving untasted the fruit and acid vintage of her banquet, anathematising the whole turnout as 'a deuced rotten Barma-coide faste.' He was 'out of soorts,' he said; 'complatly down on his luck;' and he'd 'be off and take a moonloight stroll on the *baché*.' But instead of walking towards the *baché*, I see him follow the road to the Calle de la Reyna—Queen-street—in which my lady Inez lives.

'That's not the way to the Atlantic, old man!' I shout after him.

'You be smothered!' he replies, goes on, and I turn towards mine inn.

But scarcely am I settled to my whisky and cigar, when in rushes O'Grady, pale and agitated. He seizes my tumbler, and drains it at a draught.

'In the name of goodness,' I say, 'what's up? Where have you been? what on earth have you been doing?'

'Doing! look here!' and stripping off his coat he shows me a wound through the fleshy part of his left arm, which had saturated his sleeve with blood, and from which the gore was still oozing.

'Great Heavens!' I exclaim, 'how's this? What row have you been in? Who has wounded you after this fashion?'

'Don't be after making a fuss, Tim,' he says, 'it's nothing—nothing to what oi gave Carlos de Garrido, leeftenant of artillery stationed here,—ye know the baste,—and who, belave me, won't be able to show on parade wid his guns for a month to come. Oi didn't go to the say, as ye know. Oi went to have a quiet chat and a dish of tay wid Inez, wid the Señora Povero Diabolo. Oi mane oi'd fraquently been before, and oi fancy me prisence was welcome. Well, the tay, or rather some voile chocolate, had been sarved, and oi was telling me lady in me best Spanish of Pocos Pesos' *fate*,—whew!—from the Powers ounly knows where, Carlos de Garrido tares into the room, blurts out a word or two oi don't understand, then draws a stiletto, and widout By your lief, or Wid your lief, dales me a pred, the coward! Faith, he staggered me a bit; but oi was on me pins in a jiffey. Oi wrenched the wapon from his hand, and letting drive—one, two—right from the shoulder, hit full into his face, reeled him over, and oi think that oi have irremadially damaged his big Rooman nose, and deesposed of two or tree of those tobacco-doyed teet of his down his ugly troat. Inez screamed, clung to me arum, intrated me to spare her coozen—maybe he was her coozen, though the family loikeness isn't strong—and then fainted away. Oi left her loying sinseless in one corner of the flure, Garrido blading in another, and here oi am. Sind for some more dhrink, Tim; for oi'm hated and favered, and thin we'll be talking the mather over in pace.'

Betimes next day in walks

Don Pedro to Dickson's, and seeks an interview with O'Grady. The old caballero is more polite than ever; he bows and scrapes; figuratively he kisses Teddy's hands and feet; assures him of his exalted estimation; and ends by requesting the honour of crossing swords with him that evening in the gardens at the end of the town. He adds that he must vindicate the honour of his house, and keep from scandal his young wife's reputation. He has evidently got hold of the wrong end of the story, for he makes no allusion to the artillery cousin, nor to the dagger-stab still smarting and paining the man he is addressing; he merely, over and over again, insists on fighting. O'Grady tells him that he has not the least objection to fight; indeed, as an Irishman, he is rather given that way; but that upon much the same principle that he would not marry a woman old enough to be his grandmother, he'd as lief not fight a gentleman of sufficient years to be his grandfather, and which Don Pedro certainly is. Upon which the Don's blood is more up than ever. He says that he is juvenility itself; that his feelings are young, if, indeed, his age is advancing; that he belongs to the best of nobility; and that no Spaniard, from the Cid down to Espartero, was ever too old for the duello. Fight he must, and fight he will.

'Bay it so,' says O'Grady; 'oi'm your man, and by the poiper that played before Moses, look out for squalls, for oi'll tache you

"what pirils do environ
The man that meeddles wid cauld iron."

Adios, viva usted con Dios, as ye yoursels say in these paarts.'

So the meeting was settled; and at sundown O'Grady and I, with Castoroilo, the doctor, in attendance, sneak into the gardens as

quietly as possible. But imagine our astonishment, when we had been trying to keep the matter dark, to find half of the *élite* of Santa Cruz drawn together to witness the passage of arms between their Intendente and the English officer. Yes; on the walks and plats there were the men smoking and lounging; in the summer-houses and pavilions there were the women prying and peeping, tricked out, all in their best go-to-bull-fights finery, and all 'nods and becks and wreathed smiles.' There they were, giggling and flirting, eating ices, drinking chocolate, and making an outing and a holiday of the whole business. Likely enough they looked upon Pedro and O'Grady as a couple of matadors brought into the ring for an encounter with an Andalusian bull.

Soon the Don comes on the field. He divests himself of his cloak and military tunic, and in his shirt-sleeves and tight pantaloons looks like the driest of dried Guanche mummies in the city of Laguna hard by. He does not seem to have an inch of solid flesh into which O'Grady's small-sword could be driven, nor a single drop of that blue blood he is always boasting about to be set free from his shrivelled veins.

The two men—the one so old and time-worn, the other so young and world-fresh—take post opposite each other, and well-trying Toledo blades are placed in their hands. They salute and put themselves 'on guard.'

At the very first exchange of 'feints' I see that the plucky old Don is an adept swordsman; he handles his weapon with so much grace and delicacy. O'Grady is less polished and attractive with his sword, but I know him to be no mean fencer—that he has a quick eye, an iron wrist, strength

and agility to counterbalance his opponent's superiority. The odds—and I daresay those ladies were making bets in Havana cigars, Paris gloves, and bonbons with their attendant cavaliers—were therefore to my mind in favour of my principal.

The attack begins.

Clink, clink, clink, clink. The swords ring one against the other. Point and parry, parry and point, are rapidly and dexterously exchanged. Clink, clink, clink, clink. The blades are disengaged while each man pauses for an instant to take breath.

Presently the combat is resumed. Clink, clink, clash, clash, clink. A lunge might and main from the Don, an incomplete faulty guard by O'Grady, and he gets pricked, hardly more, in the forearm.

'Bueno, bueno!' the lookers-on shout, and clap their hands, just as if they were applauding a neat hit or catch at a cricket-match.

Again the swords are crossed.

Clink, clink, clash, clash, clink, clash, g-u-r-r-h, as one iron scrapes against the other. Ah, O'Grady's point has made a very decided, but not deep, puncture in what little there is of the Intendente's deltoid.

'Basta, basta, basta! It is enough,' we all exclaim; 'it is enough! Blood has been spilt on both sides. It is enough, Don Pedro; enough, O'Grady!'

'Oi'm quite contint,' calls out Teddy, dropping his rapier.

'*Para mi! non soy!*—I'm not satisfied!' spits out his antagonist. He is livid with rage, smarting with pain, and wants *mucho mas sangre*—much more blood.

So, spite of our endeavours and protestations, at it they go again; but not for long; for, whether from fatigue or mischance we know not, the Don makes a fatal error—exposes his defence; O'Grady

sees it, lunges like lightning and with terrible force. Ah, *mal-dita, carramba!* His blade transfixes his enemy somewhere about the seventh rib.

He staggers, and falls back on the turf; the men crowd up; the women scream; Fernando de Castoroilo examines the wound, shakes his head, and sends off to apprise Inez of her chance of widowhood, who, we hear subsequently, receives the news with a pleasant hopeful smile.

Then the aguazils—the Santa Cruz ‘bobbies’—who had been dodging behind the orange- and olive-trees, and had not attempted to interfere before, move up, and ‘run us both in.’

Next morning we are taken before the Alcade—the beak—and examined; but as the fight is declared on all sides to have been strictly on the square, entirely in accordance with the laws of Spanish honour, and moreover as very many of the worthy Santacruzians are waiting impatiently for old Pedro’s official and marital dead man’s shoes, why the worshipful magistrate lets us off with a fine, and an injunction to clear out of the city *ventre à terre*. So for a few days we rusticate in the grass-grown streets of Laguna; then once more embark on board the Floriline, set sail alow and aloft, and turn our backs on Inez, Pedro,

Pocos Pesos, Garrido, and the whole ‘biling.’

Years passed away. O’Grady, poor fellow, had been killed in the Caffre wars, and I had returned to England.

Shopping one day in Regent-street, my attention was attracted by a lady’s voice asking, in a foreign accent, for some ‘silk of Lyons’ and some ‘gloves of Paris.’ Turning round, and glancing under a fashionable bonnet, who should I see but our old friend Inez of Teneriffe, looking more matronly, but as fascinating and pretty as ever? We entered at once into conversation. She told me that Don Pedro recovered from his wound, and after plaguing her for ‘two, tree years’ with a churchyard cough, which the doctors were not obliging and gallant enough to permit to run its own rapid course, but were always patching up with ‘oil of codfeeshe,’ had at last ‘gone out,’ the saints be praised! That—*si, certamente!*—she was married again, was now the wife of El Colonel Carlos de Garrido, with a lapful of children, and—with the same flash of the sparkling eyes that had bowled over Teddy on the Marina of Santa Cruz—‘*todavia a la disposiçion de usted, señor*—entirely at your service, sir.’

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER XXV.

PERSECUTION.

GENERAL HAWKE was very ill for some days after this. He had had a slight stroke, and the doctor told Randal that though he might recover to a great extent, it was likely that his mind would never be quite the same again. During those days he often asked for Mabel, and she was glad to go and sit by him; for though she did not feel herself of any use there, his room was a refuge from Randal. He was constantly there, for he nursed his father and watched over him with the attention of a much more unselfish character; but he seemed to feel that love-making was out of place in a sick-room, and Mabel was at peace as she sat there quietly working near the old man's pillow.

Still there were meals, and there were hours in the drawing-room and garden when, if Randal did not persecute her with words, he made her feel what was in his mind all the time. She wished she could make him understand how extraordinary she thought this behaviour of his; did not he know what she must think of him, since she heard the truth about Mrs. Lancaster? but he seemed quite easy on that score. Apparently he did not understand how entirely that history had altered and decided Mabel's feelings towards him. He was just the same as before, only more attentive, more affectionate, more happily confident in his manner, and he

would not see the stiffness that she tried to put into hers. He did not allude to his former engagement till one evening, when he came to her in the drawing-room, and told her that he was obliged to go away the next morning, to stay one night. Mabel felt very glad, but she did not say so.

'My father is really better,' said Randal, 'and his mind will soon be quite clear again, whatever Dr. King may say. What do you think he said to me just now, Mabel?'

'I don't know. What?'

'He asked me when we were going to be married—you and I.'

'I hope you told him—never,' said Mabel, with crimson cheeks.

'No, I did not,' said Randal. 'I told him that I thought we must wait till he was well enough to go to the wedding. He said: "No, that won't do. You might wait for ever." I believe it would be a wonderful thing for him, if that wish of his was carried out.'

Mabel sat quite silent, looking on the ground.

'Have not you had time enough to forgive me, Mabel?' he said. 'The best excuse for that most unfortunate affair is that it happened before I knew you. Every one has something to repent of and be forgotten. A good girl like you ought to think it her duty to forgive.'

'I have nothing to forgive,' said Mabel, 'except the way in which you tried to deceive me about that—saying things about Mr. North-

cote, as if it was he, and almost pretending that Mrs. Lancaster was out of her mind, poor thing, when all the time—I can't think how you *could*!

'All very wrong, no doubt,' said Randal; 'but can't you excuse what was done for love of you?'

'I don't like such love as that. I don't want it,' said Mabel.

'You hate me, then?' said Randal.

He had walked across to the window, and stood there looking at her as she sat in the corner of the sofa. Her hands were clasped together, the small fingers squeezing each other tightly; the bright flush had faded and left her very pale.

'No, no,' she said, shaking her head. 'I don't exactly hate you, but I am astonished at you—how you can say these things to me, when you know how wretched you have made poor Mrs. Lancaster.'

'I assure you, Mabel, you are quite mistaken,' said Randal solemnly. 'She is not wretched at all. She has made up her mind; she has had her revenge, by doing her best to blacken me in your eyes. My dear girl, you don't understand that kind of woman. She is a thorough flirt, and flirts don't break their hearts. Trust me, I know all about it.'

Mabel did not believe him; but there was something in Randal—he ought to have succeeded better in life, with that to help him—which generally prevented people from setting themselves violently in opposition to him. Those words against Mrs. Lancaster made her shrink from him all the more, but she said nothing. After a pause she got up and walked towards the door. Randal came hastily after her.

'I may not see you again to-

night,' he said. 'Won't you say good-bye? I must be off early to-morrow.'

Mabel gave him her hand: he held it, and looked earnestly into her face.

'Sleep well,' he said; 'and if you think of me at all, try to forgive me. It was all very wrong, but it was for your sake. If you had never come here, you little witch, with those wonderful eyes of yours that read a man's thoughts, nothing of all this would have happened.'

'O, don't say that! Let me go!' exclaimed Mabel.

He stood a moment longer, holding her hand, and then suddenly kissed it and let it go.

'You will have to belong to me one of these days, *ma belle*!' he said.

In spite of her lover's injunction, Mabel did not sleep at all well that night. She was very much troubled in mind, and lay awake thinking of him and his obstinacy, wondering what was to be the end of this state of things, and wondering, too, whether Mrs. Lancaster was really miserable. She was learning by experience to take Randal's assurances with a great deal of doubt. But the difficulty was, how was she to get out of it all, to free herself completely from him and his influence? It was all very well to make resolutions, but not so easy to keep them, with Randal in the house. She might shrink from him, and try to avoid him, but he was irrepressible.

Presently she fell asleep, and dreamed that Mrs. Lancaster, prettier than she ever was by daylight, was reproaching her bitterly for taking Randal away. Mabel tried to defend herself, and woke with tears on her face. But in consequence of this dream she made a resolution. Randal was

gone, and for once she would act like an independent woman.

After breakfast, and after visiting the General, who was sleepy, and did not seem to want her, Mabel put her hat on and went out to the stable-yard. She had often been there with Randal to take sugar and apples to the horses, but to-day she went with a different purpose. Randal's horse, Turk, was outside the stable-door, having his legs washed. Jenkins, the groom, looked up from his splashing to touch his cap to Miss Ashley.

'Is the Turk tired, Jenkins?' said Mabel.

'O, dear, no, miss! He's only been as far as the station.'

'I want very much to go to St. Denys this morning. Do you think you could take me?'

Mabel was alarmed at her own boldness, and spoke very doubtfully.

'Yes, miss, I could take you,' said Jenkins, rather surprised.

'In the dog-cart, did you mean?'

'Yes. How soon can you be ready?'

'In twenty minutes, miss.'

'Thank you,' said Mabel.

She did not go back into the house, but wandered about till Jenkins brought the carriage round. He was sure that his master would wish him to attend to Miss Ashley's orders; all the servants saw very well what was to be.

'I want to go to Captain Cardew's house,' Mabel said, as they drove down the hill. 'Do you know which it is?'

'Yes, miss.'

Mabel felt none of the misgivings that poor Flora Lancaster had felt when she came to visit her. She was only eager to be there, and wished unreasonably that the Turk would trot faster. She was delighted to find herself

at last at the garden-gate, at the house-door, actually ringing the bell. It was only when the little maid had opened the door and was staring at her that she was suddenly seized with a nervous fear: perhaps Mrs. Lancaster would not see her; perhaps she would be angry and reproachful, as she was in the dream.

Mabel provided against the first danger by following the maid straight into the drawing-room, where Flora, pale, hollow-eyed, and wrapped in a large shawl, was sitting in an armchair. Mrs. Cardew, in a very old gown and cap, with a duster in her hand, was settling the ornaments on the chimneypiece. Neither of them dreamed of a visitor so early in the day. Mrs. Cardew, turning round in consternation, and having only had distant glimpses of Mabel driving by, did not at first know who this dark slight girl could be, who came forward to Flora with such a sad face, and such a shy yet eager manner.

Flora's pale face became rosy all of a sudden; she got up, holding her visitor's hand, and looking at her wonderingly.

Mabel broke the very awkward silence, looking at Mrs. Cardew.

'Is it—your mamma?' she said softly to Flora.

'Yes,' said Mrs. Cardew, smiling and nodding. She had just had presence of mind to drop her duster into a corner behind the coal-scuttle.

'O, this is Miss Ashley, mother,' said Flora, speaking with an effort.

Mrs. Cardew's face became grave immediately. Mabel guessed that she wondered what business Miss Ashley could have with her daughter.

'I have only a few minutes,' said Mabel, who had a loyal fear of the Turk's catching cold, 'but

I wanted most particularly to speak to you.'

Flora looked at her mother, and Mrs. Cardew, the most dutiful of women, went quietly out of the room.

'Sit down,' said Flora. 'There is a nice little chair. This is not quite such a breezy meeting as our last one on the beach, Miss Ashley.'

She sank back into her own chair, smiling at Mabel, who felt now as if she could not speak. The wreck of Flora's beauty struck her as too terrible. And was this all her fault?

She could not sit still in her chair, like a grown-up civilised woman. She came and knelt down by Flora, looking up into her face with wet imploring eyes.

'O, do forgive me!' she said. 'I did not know, and yet it is all my fault. But I hate him!'

She had taken off her hat as she left her chair, and now she stooped her head down and laid her cheek against Flora's hand, as it rested on the arm of the chair. Flora's outward calmness deserted her for a moment then. She looked at the small head with its soft dark waves of hair, at the slight little figure crouching there beside her, and shivered suddenly all over.

'O child, don't!' she cried, with a sharp pain in her voice. Then, yielding to a strong attraction that she could not herself understand, she bent down over Mabel, drew her gently into her arms, and kissed her many times.

'Did you come to comfort me, you dear child?' she said presently.

'I don't know,' said Mabel. 'I came to see you, and to tell you that I never would—and to ask you something too.'

'What is it?' said Flora.

'What I am to do. He is so dreadfully determined. He does

not mind what I say, and it is more horrid than I can tell you, now that the General is ill. Last night I could not sleep for thinking of it. It is so trying for a girl like me.'

'You don't care for him at all?' said Flora, in a low voice. Her arm was still round Mabel, and the girl was leaning against her. It was too strange and sweet, this sympathy, to be given up quickly, and Mabel felt that she must be doubly safe from Randal, guarded thus by his old love.

'No; I did like him rather, but never so much as that. And now I can't bear to see him or think of him,' said Mabel gravely. 'And I can't possibly understand why he cares for me.'

'Does he care for you?' said Flora.

'He says so,' answered Mabel, with startled eyes.

'I should like you to think a little,' said Flora, after a pause, 'and try to find out why he professes to care so much for you. Think of the differences between you and me—your superiority to me.'

Mabel blushed and almost laughed as she looked up at her friend.

'I can't think of *that*, because it does not exist,' she said. 'You are entirely superior to me. That is part of the mystery of it.'

'No; I am your inferior,' said Flora, 'in birth, but that does not matter so much. And in something else, which is everything.'

'You don't mean money?'

'Yes; I do. Listen,' said Flora. 'If you had cared for him at all, I should never have told you this. But as you don't, and as you want to know what it is that interests him so much in you, and as you are too innocent and noble-minded to have guessed the truth for yourself, I think you had

better be made to understand it. When he broke off his engagement with me that day on the beach, he told me that it was necessary for him to marry some one with a fortune. It is a bad world, and one had better not set one's heart on it,' said Flora, ending with a sigh.

'I was most wonderfully stupid not to think of it before,' said Mabel. 'O, horrid wretch, how could he!'

'On the whole,' said Flora, 'I don't suppose he is more horrid than half the young men in England. But don't let us talk about him any more. I hope you will soon meet somebody who cares for you for yourself, dear.'

She sat dreamily gazing at Mabel, and stroking the hair back from her forehead with slow unconscious fingers.

'But what am I to do?' said Mabel.

'Be resolute, and try and leave Pensand as soon as you can. Have you no excuse for going away?'

'No, I have no friends to ask me.'

'Mrs. Strange?'

'I just know her, but I can't ask to go there,' said Mabel, shaking her head.

On that subject it seemed impossible to come to any conclusion. Flora could not help Mabel herself, and was not in a position to ask any one else to help her; it seemed as if the poor little heiress must fight her own battle as best she could. But in spite of that she felt stronger and happier, now that she and Mrs. Lancaster really understood each other. They were friends, and that was something, though it was not a friendship that could be of any use.

Mabel's first visit to St. Denys was a long one. Jenkins was tired of driving up and down the hill before she appeared; the Turk

was impatient too, and flew home as if his master was behind him.

Mabel was not Flora's only visitor that day. Dick Northcote came in towards evening, and told her that his aunt was at Carweston, and he was very dull at home.

'You people in this neighbourhood are very selfish, I think,' said Flora. 'You enjoy yourselves, going to each other's houses, and never think of that poor girl at Pensand, who is quite miserable all this time.'

'Because General Hawke is ill?' said Dick.

'That certainly does not make her any happier, because it throws her entirely with the man who wishes to marry her, and whom she dislikes with all her heart.'

'How do you know that?' said Dick. 'On the contrary, I believe she likes him very much.'

'She came to see me this morning, in a state of despair, poor child. It is true, Dick; I am not exaggerating. She does not know what to do to free herself from him, and indeed I did not know what to suggest.'

'But what does the fellow mean by it?' cried Dick, in great indignation.

'He wants her fortune, and he means to marry her,' said Flora. 'He intends to bring her round to it in time. And certainly, keeping her shut up there at Pensand, without a creature to speak to, he has a very good chance of tiring out her patience. She is very unhappy, but what can she do? Imagine her coming to *me* of all people, and confiding in me, poor little thing! I could do nothing to help her. I have no money, no influence, no establishment. If I had anything, I would fetch her away from Pensand in spite of ten guardians. Mrs. Strange might do it. Your aunt might do it. Why don't they?'

'Her being miserable, and disliking Randal, is a new light, you see,' said Dick. 'I'll bring it to bear on them this evening. I'm going to dine at Carweston.' He gazed out of the window, gave a long low whistle, and muttered, 'Poor little thing! Do you think her pretty?' he said to Mrs. Lancaster.

'Very pretty, in a peculiar interesting way. If I was Mr. Dick Northcote, I should think it only civil to go to the Castle and inquire for General Hawke.'

'Well, I suppose it would be the right thing,' said Dick, smiling slightly.

He got up to go, and then suddenly remembered his manners. 'I came to see how you were, by the bye. Do you feel any stronger?'

'Yes, I am better, thank you,' said Flora.

Dear old Dick! she thought, when she was left alone. She had plenty of things to repent of in her life—flirtations, mistakes, selfishnesses—but perhaps nothing with regard to him. One could not be double or heartless with him, good honest fellow.

'Yes,' Flora thought, 'I may be sorry for many things, but I don't think I shall be sorry for advising him to go to the Castle. Little Mabel may be happy if she finds such a refuge as that. So true and frank and kind! Ah, why are there not more men like you, Dick?'

CHAPTER XXVI.

DESPAIR.

If Mabel had thought that her persecution could not go much farther, she found herself sorely mistaken. Randal came back early in the following day, and

was more affectionate than ever. It was no use for Mabel to put on a cold manner, to give him short answers, to keep out of his way. He seemed not to see all this, but to be perfectly happy and confident, talking of plans for the future, as if it was a certain thing, and taking for granted that Mabel, little as she said, enjoyed this talk and entered into it.

That afternoon he followed her into the garden, and found her low down in a glade of rose-trees. She tried to hurry away by another path, but he overtook her at once, and she was obliged to stop, though she looked sulkily on the ground, and almost stamped her foot in her impatience of him.

'I want to tell you something about my father, Mabel,' he said. 'I saw a doctor yesterday, who told me that he would not get better as long as he had anything on his mind. You remember when he was first taken ill, dear, don't you?'

'Yes,' said Mabel.

'Well, just at that moment, if you remember, he had heard something which seemed to upset the plan he cared for most. I need not tell you what *that* is. His wishes and mine are the same, you know, Mabel. When I can tell my father that you have said "Yes" to me, he will soon be all right again. An easy mind is the great thing in an illness like this.'

Mabel was silent.

'I don't quite know what makes you hesitate so long, Mabel darling. You can't have any doubt of my feelings towards you; do bring this long torment to an end. You don't seem to understand or believe in my love for you.'

'I don't understand it, and I don't believe in it,' said Mabel, raising her eyes for one instant to his. 'It is not *me* you care for at all.'

Randal looked at her with a curious expression. After a moment he said very quietly,

‘What in the world can have put that nonsense into your head, Mabel? You would know how wrong you are if you let yourself think. If I did not love you very truly, I should be angry at such an idea.’

‘I wish you would be angry,’ said poor Mabel.

‘No; you may make me unhappy, but not angry, whatever you choose to say or do. But now let us be serious. Are you going to save my father’s life?’

‘I don’t believe it depends on me,’ said Mabel, still looking down, and wishing, O, with such earnestness! that she was as active as other girls. Then she thought she would set off and run away, anywhere, to be away from him, and he would hardly dare to run after her. But Mabel could not run; she must stay there among the rose-bushes, and listen to whatever Randal chose to say to her.

‘I assure you it does,’ he said. ‘Why can’t you make up your mind? Don’t you see how much better it would be for both of us to have something settled? You must dislike this uncertainty as much as I do; you can’t be happy in your position here. It is altogether absurd. But as my wife, don’t you see, dear Mabel, you would at once be in your right place, and the dearest comfort to us all. Listen; will you let it be next week? I could easily make arrangements.’

Mabel could have cried, she felt so helpless, so miserable. Randal thought his perseverance was going to be rewarded, when she looked up with wet eyes and trembling lips, clasping and unclasping her hands mechanically, and trying to speak, as it seemed,

without being able to find any words.

‘My darling,’ he said, ‘don’t look so unhappy. Only trust yourself to me.’

He came a little nearer, but Mabel moved quickly away from him.

‘No,’ she said. ‘How am I to make you understand, if you will not? I don’t like you; I won’t marry you, either next week or any time. No, indeed, I am not happy here. I must go away. Somebody will take me in.’

‘My dear girl, you take things up so violently,’ said Randal. ‘I can’t let you go away, and you could not do it, you know. You are bound to stay in my father’s house, if he chooses to have you there, till you come of age or marry. As to the other affair—you are so agitated that I will say no more to-day. But I am sure you will soon be more reasonable.’

Mabel turned away from him and did not answer. He lingered a moment, and then walked slowly away towards the house. When he was out of sight she hurried to the house too, by another path, and up to her own room, where she spent the rest of the afternoon. This seemed indeed to be despair. There was to be no escape from this prison of Pensand; nobody could take her away from it; and day by day she was to be tormented by this love-making of Randal, which she now hated more than words could say. And she was in this bondage for two whole years,—bound to stay here till she came of age or married,—and of course she would be allowed to marry no one but Randal himself. Very fervently did poor Mabel wish herself back at school, with Miss Wrench and the most unpleasant set of girls. She could not even appeal to the General against his son’s unmanly

ungenerous behaviour; he would hardly understand what she was talking about.

She looked out of the window, with wild thoughts of running away, of escaping to some one—if there was any one in the world—who would be strong enough to protect her from Randal. Come of age or marry! the words went on ringing in her ears. And then suddenly, she did not know why or how, there came into her mind the remembrance of that other man who had asked her to marry him—his tall, lanky, bending figure, his kind odd face, the deep tenderness in his voice as he said,

‘Will you let me put an end to all this trouble—to your loneliness, my child? Will you come to my home, and let me take care of you there—always?’

That was at any rate a certain refuge. Mabel sat thinking for a few minutes, with her face buried in her hands, remembering all that strange scene, and how Anthony had said that any change was impossible with him, and that if she ever changed her mind, and would give him the smallest sign of it—Mabel made a sudden dash across the table at her writing-case, and wrote with such a trembling hand that she could hardly read her own words:

‘Dear Mr. Strange,—You said you would never change your mind. I have changed mine, and if you have not forgotten, it shall be as you wished that day. I am too miserable to stay here any longer.—Yours truly,

‘MABEL ASHLEY.’

It did not occur to the poor girl, in her confusion and distress, that an appeal to Anthony’s friendliness would have been speedily answered, without such

a sacrifice as this. She hastily put up her letter and directed it, and spent the rest of the afternoon with her door a little way open, listening for Stevens, who always fetched the letter-bag from the study, and sent it down to meet the postman in the village. Stevens had always looked at her kindly, and she thought that even if the bag was locked, he would see that her letter went safely.

She crept down-stairs when she heard his steady old steps coming down the study passage, and met him in the hall. He stopped, quite startled at the sight of the little lady, anxious-eyed, with crimson cheeks, holding out her letter nervously.

‘Shall I take the bag back, miss, and get it put in?’ he said.

‘No; O no, don’t do that,’ said Mabel. ‘It might be late. Only if you would see that the postman has it, Stevens, please.’

‘He shall have it, miss,’ said the old butler; and he took the letter and went away, rather troubled in his mind.

Mabel went back to her room again, and stayed there till dinner-time. She sat in the window, thinking of Anthony Strange, and trying rather vainly to realise what she had done. She told herself over and over again of Anthony’s goodness, his cleverness, his true affection for herself, the lovely old house that was his home, his mother’s kind bright face. Under their care a desolate girl might surely be happy and at peace; and yet Mabel was conscious of a regret that was almost terror, and a longing wish to have her letter back again. She scolded herself very much for this foolish weakness, and tried to send it away into the background; but it would not be quite driven from its place.

At dinner Randal behaved very well, and said nothing that could trouble her. Afterwards he went away to his father's room, and Mabel was alone in the drawing-room. She could not bear the largeness and stillness of it, with that restless pain at her heart, and after walking up and down two or three times she opened one of the windows, and went out into the starlight. There was a little chill in the air, for September had begun; but it was a very still and beautiful night, and the stars looked so large and glorious that it could not be called dark. Mabel was not the least afraid of being out at night by herself; she knew the garden well, and had wandered about in it at every reasonable hour; still there was a strange loneliness in those shadowy starlit glades, and, keeping away from them, she wandered a little way along the drive, as far as the great ivy-covered mass of the gate-tower. She was a few yards from it, standing in the fullest light there was, when a quick step startled her, and a man came suddenly out of the deep shadow of the archway, and was passing close to her, when he stopped short with an astonished exclamation. At the first glimpse of the tall figure in that dim light the thought of Anthony had flashed across Mabel's mind. Had he by any wonderful means received her letter already? But the next moment she saw that it was a young man with a beard—Dick Northcote.

'Miss Ashley! what—where are you going?' stammered Dick, in his amazement.

He stood up square and strong before her, and his holding her little cold hand for a moment in his great warm one did not somehow surprise either of them. Mabel was once more insanely

and ridiculously glad to see him, and the remembrance that after all it was not he who was Mrs. Lancaster's lover took away the only drawback to her pleasure.

'I am not going anywhere,' she said, smiling. It was some time since poor Mabel had spoken so cheerfully. 'I am only taking a little walk. It is nice out of doors.'

'Yes, to be sure it is,' said Dick. 'I don't wonder, only—you may be surprised to see me at this time of night, but I was on my way home from Carweston. I've been shooting there to-day, and I thought I would call and inquire for the General. How is he?'

'He is just the same, thank you; he does not alter much,' said Mabel. And this time there were depths of dismalness in her voice which filled Dick with pity.

'Perhaps I won't go on to the house as I have met you,' he said. 'We have had a good day's sport. I'm going over there again to-morrow morning. Anthony Strange has capital shooting.'

'Does he shoot?' said Mabel.

'Good Heavens, no! Can you fancy Anthony with a gun? He is far too soft-hearted. He doesn't care even to look at the bag, dear old natural philosopher.'

'Don't you think he is nicer than—any one you ever knew?' said Mabel rather dreamily.

'Much nicer,' answered Dick, with heartiness.

'Yes; so I think.'

'And he seems to have very much the same opinion of you that you have of him,' said Dick; but to this Mabel made no response.

'You must be moped to death up here, and still more now that the General is ill,' said Dick, with colonial frankness.

'Not moped exactly,' said Mabel, with an irrepressible sigh.

'Plagued and tormented, then,' said Dick, in his deep distinct tones.

'O, hush!' she said, putting up her hand. 'They might hear you.'

'Let them hear me. Why don't you go away from this place? What is the use of staying here to be miserable? You had much better leave General Hawke and Randal to take care of themselves.'

'He is my guardian, you know, and I am not nearly of age yet,' said Mabel softly.

'A pretty guardian!' said Dick. 'However, we'll let him rest. Miss Ashley, do you think me a very rough fellow?'

Mabel looked up, and wished it was not quite so dark, that she might see whether Dick was joking. She was in no mood for anything of that kind, so she answered him rather wearily, 'O no; why should I?'

'Most people do, I believe,' said Dick. 'And I suppose you feel that I am a stranger, that you know next to nothing of me?'

'I don't feel that either,' said Mabel. 'I never could, since you were so good to me on the journey.'

'By the bye, do tell me,' said Dick, 'what it was that made you so angry with me that day when I came with my aunt. Had you heard anything against me?'

Mabel was silent for a minute or two. She was trembling a little, and wondering what Dick meant by talking in this way. But she answered him bravely, in a very sweet confident voice,

'Nothing that I believe now.'

Something in the words, or in Mabel's way of saying them, touched Dick strangely. There was another silence between them,

as they stood there under the stars. Poor little Mabel's heart was beginning to beat terribly fast. Here was her friend and champion, who had meant so well all through, and had been so slandered by Randal for his own purposes. O, what did it mean, this mixture of happiness and dread? Perhaps Dick's real story would have shaken Mabel's confidence in him a little; she would not have understood Mrs. Lancaster's part in it, or cared so much for an affection that could be easily transferred. But Mabel was a girl, and Dick was a man, so their views on that subject were not likely to be quite the same. Dick knew that he had been sincere then, and was sure that he felt equally sincere now. He had had a fancy for the little forlorn girl ever since he travelled down with her, only her coldness that day had touched his pride and repelled him. The Flora affair had been a fit of madness, of which Flora herself had cured him very easily. So Dick, knowing all this, was quite free of self-reproach, and there was not a falter or a doubt in his voice as he spoke to his companion in the starlight, and said,

'Look here; do you like me well enough to marry me?'

It was most dreadfully sudden, though Mabel had half known that it was coming. But Dick was not at all prepared for the way in which his offer was received. She started away from him with a low cry of 'O, don't!' and then stopping and covering her face with her hands, began to cry and sob so bitterly that the whole of her little figure was shaken, and Dick, in much consternation, found himself obliged to support her gently with his arm. Perhaps she hardly knew what it was, but the way in

which she leaned against it was some slight satisfaction to him.

'What is it? Have I done very wrong?' inquired Dick, with the greatest tenderness, as soon as the sobs were a little less violent. 'Don't tell me to go away, because I could not leave you here in this state. There, do you want your handkerchief? here it is. Never mind! I would never have said it if I had thought it would vex you so, indeed. Do forgive me, and stop crying! I shall never forgive myself.'

'O, it's not that,' sighed Mabel, beginning to recover and feel ashamed of herself.

'What is it, then? Tell me all about it,' pleaded Dick. 'Did you really mind my saying that so much? I do love you, and I wish you could love me, though I am a great deal too rough for a little piece of china like you. But anyhow tell me what made you cry.'

This speech nearly upset Mabel again. But she made a great effort to conquer herself, stood very upright, dried her eyes, and began to speak, though every word seemed to go through her own heart with a sharp little pain.

'I'm dreadfully sorry,' she began; 'I ought to have made you understand that you must not say that; it was very wrong of me. I ought not to be unhappy now, for I don't think I shall be here much longer.'

'Good heavens, are you ill?' exclaimed Dick, the extreme mournfulness of these words only bringing one idea to his mind.

Mabel laughed, she could not help it; but she almost cried again.

'O dear, what an ungrateful wretch I am! No, I am not going to die. I believe—I almost think—I am going to be married.'

'To Randal Hawke?' said Dick, with a strange feeling that this was Nemesis—Flora Lancaster over again.

'No, O no! Never, never!'

'That's right, at all events.' Dick stopped short, and meditated. This certainly was the oddest affair altogether. He did not like to ask who it was, and he wondered still more what had made the girl cry. A conviction suddenly took possession of him, and he put it into words at once, bluntly, without much consideration for Mabel.

'Whoever he is, you don't care for him.'

'You have no right to say that,' said Mabel, in a low sad voice, turning her head away.

'I beg your pardon with all my heart.'

Dick was really ashamed of himself, and felt very foolish, but he had his own opinion all the same. Just then he had nothing more to say, for he could not ask Mabel questions, and she naturally was not inclined to tell him anything. On the whole, he thought she was a wise girl when she said to him, in the same sad gentle manner:

'Don't you think you had better go away now?'

'I suppose I had,' said Dick. 'But I am not easy in my mind about you, and I shall not be satisfied till I know all about this. You won't be angry with me for saying so?'

'O no. But don't think about it; it is no use.'

She held out her hand to Dick, but he did not take it at once. He stood silent for a moment, looking at her.

'I must risk making you really angry with me,' he said. 'Would there have been any chance for me, do you think, if this other thing had not existed? Don't

answer in words. If it is "No," take your hand away. If it is "Yes," give it to me. Only to say good-night, you know.'

Mabel only hesitated an instant, and then silently gave him her hand. Dick justified her confidence in him by behaving like a hero. He squeezed it, certainly, but very gently, as if he was afraid of hurting the little fingers. Then he said,

'I can't thank you. But if the gulf between us is not quite impassable, I shall win you yet. Good-night.'

He let her hand go, and walked off at once with long quick steps. Mabel stood as if she was in a dream, and listened till the last sound had died away. Then she drew a long breath, which yet was not quite a sigh, and stole softly back through the shadows to the house.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANTHONY AND DICK.

MR. STRANGE came down early the next morning, as usual, and found his letters waiting for him. There were long discussions from his antiquarian friends, reports from archæological societies, anxious for his valuable help; clerical business, magisterial business, advertisements, and begging letters. Anthony was generally ready enough to give his attention to all these things, but on this particular morning there was one letter which eclipsed them all, and that was directed in a trembling girlish hand. The others were pushed into a heap, unopened. Anthony read this letter, threw himself into a chair to think, started up again instantly, and rushed up-stairs three steps at a time to his mother's room. But

when he reached the door he changed his mind; perhaps he remembered that Mrs. Strange was not likely to be up, or ready to listen to him. He ran down-stairs again, and meeting the butler in the hall, told him to ask the ladies not to wait breakfast for him, took his hat, and went out. The butler looked after him with some surprise, as he hurried across the garden, and shut the iron gate behind him with a sharp clang.

'Master looks as happy as if it was his wedding-day,' said the butler to the cook.

'There's never a lady in these parts good enough for him, bless his kind heart,' replied she.

Anthony had his own short cut to Pensand through lanes and fields. No doubt he trespassed continually, but he was so well known and loved that nobody thought of this. Now the way was shorter than ever, for he could strike across stubble-fields, from which the golden corn had been reaped and carried away. So he went straight across country to Pensand as the crow flies; his long legs might truly be said to devour the way, and he carried Mabel's little letter open in his hand.

'Poor dear child!' thought Anthony almost aloud, as he strode through the stubble. 'What it must have cost her to write this! What a blind fool I have been not to see, all this time, that I need only speak again! That wretched Randal must have driven her to this.' Anthony grasped his stick and shook it in the air. 'Thank heaven, she knew there was a refuge open to her, my little Mabel. There is not one girl in a thousand who would have had the noble courage to write this; but she knew who she had to deal with, whose heart was her

own. I shall see her this morning, but we will say nothing to those Hawkes—how well their name suits them! Then I will go back and tell my mother, and we will go together to fetch our darling this afternoon. I defy you to keep her, Randal, now that she has given herself to me.'

Such thoughts as these kept good Anthony Strange company through that morning walk of his, till he came to the end of the fields, where a stile and a rough flight of stone steps led down into the lane. On reaching this more public part of his walk he folded up Mabel's letter and put it away; it was not for ordinary eyes, such as he might meet in the lane. And he had not gone many yards between those two high banks of reddened leaves and curling fern, when he met Dick Northcote, marching along in equal haste with himself.

'I'm glad I met you,' said Dick, shaking hands with great heartiness. 'I was going to Carweston to consult you about something.'

'Then walk on with me. I am going to Pensand,' said Anthony.

Dick wondered what could take this funny old fellow to Pensand at such an hour in the morning. 'Some good reason, probably,' he thought, as he looked at Anthony's beaming face. 'I'll tell him all about it at once, and I'm sure he will help me if he can.'

'I was at Pensand last night,' he said; 'I saw Miss Ashley.'

'Did you?' said Anthony.

'Yes; and she ought not to stay there any longer. It is not a fit place for her, especially now that General Hawke is ill. You know what Randal is, as well as I do. Fortunately she hates him.'

'It won't last much longer,' said Anthony.

'Is the General going to die, or what is going to happen?' asked Dick, in a decided manner. 'Don't be surprised at my taking it up, for I'm tremendously interested.'

'Not more than I am, Dick,' said Mr. Strange.

'Ah! but you don't know what I'm driving at. I must explain—of course in confidence. I should not mention the subject, only I know how friendly you have always been to her—and I don't think she would object to my asking your advice. The plot is thickening, you see. I thought it was only Randal, but there's some one else in the wind now.'

'I don't understand you, my friend,' said Anthony.

He stopped in the middle of the road, folded his arms, and gazed at Dick with a slight puzzled frown.

Dick smiled under his beard, and stared at the opposite hedge.

'Well, you know,' he said, 'you might search all over England without finding a nicer girl than she is. I've come to that conclusion, so now you understand.'

Anthony's face grew graver; a kind sorrowful look came into his eyes.

'Poor old Dick! I'm sorry for you,' he said, in a low voice.

'I shall not begin to be sorry just yet,' said Dick, 'till I am quite sure there's nothing to be done. I may as well tell you all about it. I found her in the garden last night wandering about by herself, her spirits at a very low ebb, and in the course of talking to her I let out what I meant. Poor little thing, she was most awfully cut up, and she told me she was engaged to some one else—not Randal; but it is quite plain to me, whoever he is, she doesn't care for him, and is wretched. So I shall be obliged

to you if you will show me the way out of this labyrinth.'

'Who does she care for?' said Anthony dreamily.

'Me,' said Dick.

He thought Anthony Strange more of a natural curiosity than ever; here he was turning quite pale—from sympathy, Dick supposed.

'Are you sure of that?' said Anthony.

'Positively certain.'

Anthony stared along the lane for a minute or two, then on the ground at his feet. Then he seemed to rouse himself, drew a long breath, and straightened his shoulders.

'This wants thinking about, old fellow,' he said. 'I won't go on to Pensand now. Come back with me to breakfast.'

Dick spent most of that morning talking to his aunt about Mabel, and pouring out his feelings. She could not help smiling a little as she listened, though this pleased her better than the Mrs. Lancaster affair.

Anthony, also, was talking to his mother about Mabel. He was asking her to go to Pensand that very afternoon, and to bring the poor girl away from that 'hawk's nest,' as he called it.

'Insist upon it, mother,' he said. 'You always can do things if you choose. Bring her away; bring the child away, and let us have her here with us for a little while. No matter what may happen afterwards.'

'What is likely to happen afterwards, Anthony?' said Mrs. Strange.

'Who knows? Perhaps Dick,' said Anthony.

'Dick! Does Dick admire her?'

'I have some reason to think so.'

'Well,' said Mrs. Strange thoughtfully, 'Dick has been a

flirt, but I always liked him. He has a good heart underneath the flirting, and in that affair the other day the fault was probably on Mrs. Lancaster's side. Mabel Ashley might do worse than marry my old friend Dick. Better than Randal Hawke, at any rate. Do you know, Anthony, at one time I had an idea that you might yourself—'

She laid her hand on his shoulder as he sat beside her, and looked at him, smiling a little.

'Even you, old Rector,' she said. 'Your heart is young enough still.'

'May it never grow old!' said Anthony.

He made her no other reply, and though he smiled, it was so sadly that she felt something must be wrong with him. This instinct troubled her, but she asked him no more questions; and there was one little explanation that certainly she would never see. Mabel's letter lay on the hearth in Anthony's room, a small heap of flimsy gray ashes.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FREEDOM.

MRS. STRANGE took Kate Northcote with her, and drove to Pensand Castle that afternoon. On the way, Kate, full of her new interest in Mabel Ashley, could not help confiding it to her old friend.

'Anthony hinted it to me this morning,' said Mrs. Strange. 'I think it might be a good thing for them both; and what an excellent match for Dick, though I daresay that view of it never crossed his mind!'

'He is such a careless creature, that I think you are most likely right,' said Kate, smiling. 'I

only hope he will be steady and constant.'

'O yes. Anthony admires and likes this girl so much, that I feel sure there is something in her, something worth a man's constancy,' said Mrs. Strange. 'Well, if I have her at Carweston, he can come there as much as he pleases. But we must expect plenty of difficulties with these guardians of hers. Randal Hawke won't like the idea of my taking her away, to begin with.'

'Randal is so entirely good for nothing, that it is dreadful to think of her having been under his influence for so long,' said Kate.

When they arrived at the Castle, Mrs. Strange began by inquiring for General Hawke. He was much the same, Stevens said. Miss Ashley was at home. But when they were in the drawing-room, it was Randal, not Mabel, who came almost immediately. He seemed ready to talk about everything, laughed, and was rather noisy; somehow he was altered from the cool elegant Randal they had known before. His face was rather thin, and his eyes were large and bright; he looked altogether ill and restless.

'And how is Miss Ashley?' said Mrs. Strange.

'She is very well, thank you. She is good enough to make herself happy in our dull sad house. But you have no idea of the difference my father's illness makes to us. Mabel is so good and kind, she sits in his room a great deal, and he likes to have her there; but any one else would feel it terribly.'

'Not very good for such a young girl, to be shut up in a sick-room,' said Mrs. Strange.

'She seems to like it.'

'I came to-day,' said Mrs. Strange, 'hoping to take her back

with me for a little visit. Is she in the house, do you know? I should like to ask her what she thinks of it.'

Randal was silent for a moment, looking at Mrs. Strange. She also looked quietly at him, and there was a determination in her face which told her friend Kate that she would have her way in the end. Randal saw it too, perhaps. He smiled faintly, got up, and walked across towards the bell. He did not ring, however, but turned round and stood on the hearth-rug.

'Exceedingly kind of you,' he said. 'Perhaps you understand that it is a great responsibility to have a charge like this, especially when her proper guardian is incapable. I am not sure, do you know, that I shall be justified in sending her away.'

'You have known me so long.'

'O, of course; I only feel very grateful to you. Mabel is a charming girl; but you don't know much of her, I think?'

'Very little,' said Mrs. Strange. 'I should be glad to improve our acquaintance.'

'Mabel is not popular with everybody,' said Randal. 'In fact, in plain English, you might find her more of a charge than you cared for. Those who admire her most—I am one of them—can't deny that she has her peculiarities. Your son may have told you that.'

'My son thinks Miss Ashley a very nice girl,' said Mrs. Strange. 'I am not at all afraid to undertake the charge.'

Kate listened with some amusement to all this. Randal smiled, stroked his moustache, looked out of the window, and then said rather suddenly,

'Well, you are very right; for she would be a treasure to any house. The truth is, Mrs. Strange,

you mean this proposal most kindly; but to me it is a positive cruelty. You don't know what this house will be without her. I should have nobody to speak to. I must stay here while my father is ill; and Mabel and I are the greatest friends.'

If Randal hoped to touch Mrs. Strange's heart, he was disappointed. As for Kate Northcote, she looked at him with scorn and wonder. Mrs. Strange said very dryly,

'Indeed! That is quite a young man's view of the question, when young men are selfish, which happens now and then, I'm afraid. Very nice for you, no doubt, to be entertained by Miss Ashley. But as I am an old woman, and have always known you, you must allow me to say that I think it is neither pleasant nor right for Miss Ashley to have no companion but you. Many girls would feel it. I don't know whether she does; she has seen little of the world. But lookers-on feel it for her.'

'In short, Mrs. Strange,' said Randal good-humouredly, 'you will have her, whether I like it or not. I must say, however, that I don't think the world's opinion matters much up here at Pensand.'

'That is a most dangerous doctrine,' said Mrs. Strange. 'But I was talking of my own opinion, not the world's, though I have no doubt it would agree with me. Yes, you must let me have her; and she must stay with me till your father is down-stairs again.'

'You are very hard upon me,' said Randal. 'Does Mr. Strange always do as you tell him? Yes? I should think he did. You will let me come and see Mabel, I hope?'

'Certainly,' Mrs. Strange felt obliged to say. 'I shall be happy to see you.'

After this Randal rang the bell, and sent Stevens to look for Miss Ashley.

Both Mrs. Strange and Miss Northcote were shocked at the look in Mabel's face, when she came into the room—it was so wild, sad, and hopeless. There was even a sort of puzzled terror in her eyes, as they wandered from one to the other. To meet them both, the representatives of two claims upon her, was almost too much for her self-command. And the kindness of Mrs. Strange's manner made things a little worse. As for Kate, Mabel just took her hand, blushing deeply, but without looking up to meet the smile that perhaps would have told her how much Kate knew. She sat down near Mrs. Strange, wondering what would happen next, and resolving once more to give no sign that she regretted that letter to Anthony, which of course had brought his mother. She had been expecting somebody from Carweston all that day. It was very good of Mrs. Strange to come herself, and Mabel felt safe at least, as she sat near the little lady who had pressed her hand with so much kindness.

'Mabel,' said Randal, 'Mrs. Strange is going to take you away.'

Mabel just lifted her eyes to Mrs. Strange's face, her colour deepening. Mrs. Strange did not quite understand the look.

'I want you to come and pay me a little visit,' she said. 'Miss Northcote is staying with me, so it will not be dull for you, and I shall be so glad to have you. Will you come back with me now?'

'O, thank you; I should like it,' said Mabel.

She turned her head slightly towards Randal, who was looking at her. It was difficult to be-

lieve that he would let her go so easily.

'It will be a charming change for you,' he said. 'My father will miss you, but he would like you to go, I daresay. As to myself, the less said the better. Mrs. Strange has just pointed out to me that I must not be selfish.'

'Thank you. Then I shall be very glad,' said Mabel to Mrs. Strange.

She was vexed that she could not accept the kindness a little more heartily. Was it not exactly what she had been longing and praying for yesterday? What she had done her best to bring to pass? Ah, well, whatever happened, it could not be so bad as staying here.

Mrs. Strange herself was puzzled and disappointed by the girl's manner. So was Kate Northcote, who had never cared for what she saw of Mabel, but who naturally thought that the near prospect of freedom from Randal Hawke and Pensand might have brought a smile and a ray of brightness to those downcast eyes.

When Mabel was gone to make her preparations, but not till just before she came down again, Randal said to Mrs. Strange,

'I suppose the presence of another lady would make it all right for her here?'

'Well, yes, of course,' said Mrs. Strange.

'If I find that my father dislikes her being away, I will find a *chaperon*,' said Randal.

Mrs. Strange looked at him rather doubtfully.

'You had much better leave her with me as long as possible, Mr. Hawke.'

On the whole Randal behaved very well. He only said to Mabel, as they were getting into the carriage, 'Good-bye. You won't forget your home.'

'I am not going so far away,' said Mabel.

Both Mrs. Strange and Kate talked to her, as they drove along, but without getting much response from the melancholy girl.

'Well,' thought Mrs. Strange, 'I fetched her to please Anthony, and I hope he knows how to manage her.'

'I suppose Dick knows the art of bringing smiles into that dismal little countenance,' thought Kate Northcote.

How much and how often Mabel had longed to turn in at those old Carweston gates, to be a guest even for an hour in that long gray house clothed with ivy! She was there at last, but it was with a feeling little short of misery that she looked up and saw Anthony standing at the door, holding out his hand to help her from the carriage.

'Here she is!' said Mrs. Strange cheerfully. 'Now, Anthony, she depends on you for a great deal of amusement. What are you going to do first?'

'I shall give her a cup of tea,' said Anthony. 'Afterwards, if she is not tired, I shall show her my garden; she has often shown me hers.'

He looked grave and kind, but Mabel would not meet his eyes. She might, if she had known the true sympathy that filled the heart and soul of this lover of hers. Still she struggled with herself, and when they were in the drawing-room she really was able to look round her, and admire all the lovely things she saw there. Kate came to her assistance, pitying what she supposed to be the girl's extreme shyness, and as they sat at tea there was quite a pleasant little talk about old china, kept up chiefly by Kate and Mrs. Strange. Mabel felt that Anthony was watching her, and only

wished she could sink into the earth; it now seemed to her a most dreadful and unwomanly thing to have written that letter. She must have been mad yesterday, she thought. To-day it seemed as if she would rather endure any horrors, even being married to Randal—but no, no! At last, thinking of the shocking thing she had done, thinking of Anthony with misery, of Dick with something like despair, the girl lifted up her eyes and looked at Anthony, the cause of all this trouble. He caught the look, and it told him, if he needed to be told, that Dick Northcote had spoken the truth to him that morning.

‘No more tea, Mabel?’ he said. ‘Then come into the garden now. There is a bowling-green, with an arbour at the end of it all covered with yellow roses and an immense scarlet geranium. Anywhere but there the contrast would be horrid.’

‘Don’t expect to see a lovely garden like Pensand,’ said Mrs. Strange.

‘She will like it much better than Pensand,’ said Anthony.

It was very frightening, but yet it was a relief, to leave the others behind and go out alone with Anthony. She felt that what she had said to Dick last night was true, he was nicer than anybody else. He did not try to make her talk, but went on himself, discoursing in his old familiar way about the trees and the flowers, showing her the long green walks that he loved; the clipped hedges, the sundial, the borders of old-fashioned flowers growing rather wildly, but sweet and graceful in their wildness.

‘When I am in the garden,’ said Anthony, ‘I like to forget that I am in the odious nineteenth century. Almost any scene in

history or romance might have been acted in a garden like this, as Shakespeare knew very well. His garden scenes are delicious. What do you think of my bowling-green?’

They stood at one end of a long level space of velvet turf, bordered by rows of great elm-trees, already beginning to show signs of autumn in their gilded leaves. Far away at one end there was a low gray wall with creepers trailing over it, a crimson Virginia creeper reigning over them all. Close by where they were standing was Anthony’s flowery arbour, which strewed the grass with rose-leaves. There was a matted seat in the arbour, and a rustic table; they went in and sat down there. Mabel felt as if she could not have walked about any longer. She leaned her elbows on the table, and shaded her eyes with one hand. Anthony leaned back and looked at her. He saw that she was trembling from head to foot.

‘Mabel,’ he said, ‘you have trusted me so far; can’t you trust me a little further?’

‘How could I?’ said Mabel, under her breath. ‘Too much already!’

‘Don’t say that,’ said Anthony. ‘I don’t think so. I had your letter this morning, my child. It was beautiful of you to write it; but I shudder to think what you must have gone through before you were driven to it.’

‘O yes, you understand that!’ exclaimed Mabel.

‘Indeed, I do. The recollection of that letter will always be a happiness to me, in one way. It shows how you believe in your friend. But, Mabel, I have a confession to make—a frightfully awkward one.’

There was something so strange, so sweet, in the tone of his voice,

that Mabel could not help looking at him.

'Yes ; I did a horrid thing, my dear. I burned your letter. Well,' Anthony went on, after a long pause, 'I had some good reasons. I thought it was better for us both. I am always forgetting my age ; not that I am really old, you know, but my mother has often told me that I have not the ways of a young man. So it was not fair that I should ask you that. And then, besides—may I go on a little further, Mabel ?'

Mabel's face was hidden in her hands. It seemed as if no girl had ever had to go through such a scene as this, and it was agony to remember that she had brought it on herself by her mad impatience. What was Anthony going to say next ? She felt that she could not look up or answer him.

'I have made a discovery,' he said, 'and I want to tell you what

it is. There is somebody else who cares for you, my child. I don't say more than I do ; but a fitter person, I suppose, and he thinks you like him. He told me all about it this morning, which was the best thing he could have done. Was he mistaken, Mabel ? just tell me that.'

'No,' Mabel breathed out under her hands. 'Then she suddenly took them away, turned her flushed face to Anthony, and spoke bravely.

'I do assure you, when I wrote the letter to you, I had no idea of that. I know now it was a very wrong thing to do ; but I only thought of your goodness and kindness, and how safe I should be. I never understood about him till he came last night—and we talked in the garden—and I told him I was engaged ; but he couldn't help seeing—'

'Don't explain any more. I understand it all,' said Anthony.

A SUMMER OUTING IN JAPAN.

AWAY from the glare and noise and the dust of Yokohama during this brilliant beautiful weather; away to some sequestered village amongst the great goblin-haunted hills, or to the health resorts nestling by the side of hot mineral springs, or to one of the pleasant spots on the coast where the air is pure and fresh, and the sky blue and cloudless. Anywhere away from the clatter of brokers' traps, the howling of the coolies, the harsh chatter of mercenary Chinamen, collars, etiquette, and Mrs. Grundy.

So say and sigh during the month of July many of our countrymen exiled in the fair romantic land of Japan; and the result of this very universal saying and sighing is a general exodus from the settlement on the shores of Yedo Bay. Resolved to go, the pleasurable difficulty arises of picking and choosing from the *embarras de richesses* presented. Granted that one can go unhampered by social or business ties, that one's health is good, and it will be found a difficulty not easily to be disposed of, so dazzling are the various paths of attraction open to inspection. One may pack up a few necessaries in a knapsack, put on an old knickerbocker suit, fill one's pockets with a sketch-book, smoking implements, and paper money, and start forth to explore; wander away from the beaten tourist tracks, along byways leading to quaint old-world towns and villages, as yet unoperated upon by the great wave of modern civilisation;

roam amongst the mountains, famous for their legends and superstitions; take the railway to the capital, and spend a pleasant week or two amongst the monuments of the mighty past which still crowd it; or hire a junk and coast away down to Kobe and on to Nagasaki through the peerless Inland Sea. These and a hundred other baits are held out to the jaded seeker for tranquillity, change of air and scene, and amusement.

But we do not want to make a toil of a pleasure by performing long journeys and roughing it extensively; so we decide to spend a week at the solitary isle of Inoshima, but a few miles from Yokohama, yet one of the most beautiful, healthy, and romantic spots in this beautiful, healthy, and romantic land.

We need order but a few essential stores to be put up and sent forward by coolies; for Inoshima is well furnished, and the frequent European visitors there have created a supply of the common articles of European food equal to the demand. A 'jinrickisha' takes us away from the objectionable suburbs of Yokohama, and lands us in front of a huge temple fane, where the country real and unadulterated may be said to begin.

The road, as befitting the country, and in keeping with the poetry with which we wish to invest everything, is rough and uneven. Brawling torrents rush along on each side, spanned now and then by quaking wooden

bridges. Right up to the clear blue sky on either side rise hills whose sides are clothed with the wild luxuriance of vegetation so charming in Japan: thickets of delicate bamboo, intermingled with the deep red of the azalea, the more delicate hues of the cryptomeria, the occasional sparkle of the camellia, and the deep sad green of the hardypine, most weird and poetical of Japanese trees. Away over the narrow stretch of paddy-fields in front, rising over distant billows of brown, green, and red, standing grand and solitary against the sky, appears the cone of Fujiyama, the Peerless Mountain. As one gazes on the scene, one stops involuntarily, and drinks in the first draught of the pure holiday air. And then we stride on, past scattered cottages, wherein the hardy ever-industrious women are spinning coarse garments or making rush baskets, where the bronzed urchins are rolling in the sun, and the poor naked labourer is resting a while from his toil in the paddy mud for a drop of tea and a whiff of tobacco; past rude rustic temples, approached by winding paths, indicated by great arches of wood or stone curiously carved; now mounting, now descending, always with the same glorious view of earth and sky spread around, until we strike the Tocaïdo, the great main-road, at the long straggling village of Totsuka. There is but little to detain us here. Hordes of Sunday visitors of the worst quality from the European settlement have long since robbed Totsuka of whatever was once there romantic and original. The children as we pass shriek, 'Tojin baka!' ('Beast of an invader!') and run away at full speed; the very dogs growl and bark as we approach; the inhabitants have grown so accustomed to foreigners

that they scarcely deign to raise their heads, and give us the ordinary civil salutation of 'Good-morning.' So we hurry through Totsuka along the great main-road, once the scene of many a stirring event and glorious pageant in the old feudal days, now an ordinary commonplace—although in certain districts beautiful—road, stretching from the eastern capital to the western.

Four miles further on and we reach the extensive village of Fujisawa—in the old days, as the great tea-houses on either side of the road still attest, an important halting-place for the retinues of the great lords on their journeys through the country. Now it is dull enough. A somewhat picturesquely-situated temple at the entrance to the village arrests the attention for a minute; but the inhabitants are as morose and uncivil as those of Totsuka; so we willingly turn off the road, and, passing under a huge stone porch, follow the well-beaten track which leads to the beautiful island of Inoshima.

As we advance, evidences that we are approaching the coast grow more and more distinct. Trees are few and far between; the rough boulders, which have been playing havoc with our feet for so many hours, are superseded by thick deep sand. Wayside shrines and hill temples become numerous; for we are nearing one of the sacred spots of Japan, and for hundreds of years the weary feet of pilgrims from every part of the country have plodded along the route we are now following. We purposely skirt the seaside village of Katasi; for it reeks with evil smells, and the inhabitants are familiar with the language and manners of the worst types of English and American tourists; and we find ourselves, just as the

sun's rays are beginning to lose their strength, and as the air is becoming tempered by the cool breeze of evening, on the sea-shore.

Well may the Japanese be proud of this bit of scenery, and class it amongst the seven great views of their land. In front, standing out of the sea, just as Mont St. Michel stands off the Norman coast, rises the densely-wooded many-templed island of Inoshima; behind which, and on each side of which, stretches the deep-blue expanse of ocean. To our right, over a purple range of hills, rises the beautiful cone of Fujiyama; and to the left wanders a bold coast outline, with a shining belt of sand, upon which the waves incessantly beat. If we are fortunate enough to escape tourists and hordes of dirty pilgrims, at first sight it seems the *beau-idéal* of a holiday resting-place; so we give our knapsacks a hitch up, and cross the narrow spit of sand, covered at high tide, which connects the island with the mainland.

Once in the quaint little tea-house, standing aside from the rough beaten village street, hidden in its own little grove of trees, and we feel that our holiday has actually begun. How sweet and fresh the air seems! How quiet and sequestered the spot! How 'dimly religious' the fading light! as, after a hearty meal, we stretch our willing limbs on the soft white mats and puff at our pipes, we watch the fishermen and women returning from their toil on the sands below, we listen to the gentle tinkle of temple bells summoning folk to vespers, ever and anon a snatch of wild song or the mournful notes of the national guitar reach our ears, and it is hard to think that rowdyism and European snobbery can ever pene-

trate here, as it often does during the fine summer and autumn months, although confined to the hours of daylight and to Sundays, and rarely extending to evenings or week-days. One by one the sounds cease and the lights fade from the windows, night steals on, and not unwillingly we turn into our soft clean quilts and are soon asleep.

Then the exquisite delight of awakening the next morning with the enchantment of the new scene spread around like a picture of Arcadia. Long before the earliest Yokohama servant has dreamt of leaving his bed, we have thrown open our shutters to let in the glorious flood of morning sunshine and the faint fresh smell of the sea, have slipped on a few clothes, and are off to the shining sands and smooth shelves of rock for a plunge. Red jellyfish and floating garbage need not be apprehended here, as in Yokohama bay. We tumble in head first, and disport ourselves in the clear cold blue water with the genuine delight of boys let loose from school. Then for a run on the sand, and breakfast, after which we have a long bright day before us. This we may pass in a dozen different ways. We are in duty bound to explore the Holy Island itself first; so we start in the lightest of flannels for the dark romantic cavern, within whose depths sits enshrined Benzaiten, the Japanese goddess of the sea. Hither during the pilgrimage season resort hundreds of all sorts and conditions of men from the remotest parts of Japan; and here, under the very nose of the goddess, dwell a tribe of small amphibious boys, who, at the sound of a foreigner's voice, rush forth, and, unimpregnated with the odour of sanctity, offer to dive or swim any distance for a small coin. Or we may climb about the

many tortuous pine-hidden paths, leading away to countless shrines and temples, some pretentious with gilding and ornament, others mere shanties of red painted wood; but all very sacred, and all tenanted by filthy old priests who clamour for alms. Or, weary of almsgiving and tramping over sharp-edged boulders, we may seek some sheltered ledge of rock away from the path, from which we may lazily watch the ever-industrious fisher-folk toiling far beneath us in the bright sparkling water for their daily bread; or feast our eyes on a view of sea, hill, and dale unequalled in Japan, and perhaps unsurpassed in the world. Thus we may linger through a day of quiet and rest, feeling already ever so much percent the better for the change of air and scene, dropping into our tea-house whenever we feel inclined for a cool nap or refreshment, independent of the whole world, and complete masters of our own movements. Moreover, we are in classic land, and, by crossing the narrow spit of sand connecting Inoshima with the mainland, may wander away in half a dozen directions over a country bearing the same historic relation to the rest of Japan that Greece does to the rest of Europe.

Hard by once stood Kamakoura, the holy city *par excellence* of Japan, holier than even Kiyoto; for before Kiyoto was built Kamakoura was in the full tide of her wealth and power. A few grand old temples, and the foundation-walls of many others are all that now remain. The sea-breeze sweeps over the site of bustling streets, and mourns fitfully through the long avenues of pine-trees which still mark the approaches to shrines famous once through the length and breadth of the land. There is a strange sad-

ness and desolation about Kamakoura, which contrasts markedly with the gaiety and animation of the villages and towns scattered about. Tourists have given a spurt to the business of the tea-houses; but during the long summer days the artist or the searcher after the romantic and picturesque may ramble at will about the large deserted courts and offices of the great temple dedicated to the war god of Japan, Hachiman, without meeting half a dozen people.

About a mile from Kamakoura, nestling in a grove of huge trees, is the colossal statue of Buddha, whereto a very pleasant excursion may be taken from Inoshima. Writers on Japan have made this trip so familiar that a description here would be superfluous; but the oldest of Yokohama settlers need never tire of following the well-known route, and 'lying off' for an hour or two under the shade of the most wonderful work of art of this art-loving people. Here in the complete solitude, with the murmuring trees on three sides and the great calm serene giant smiling on the fourth, with the beautiful sky above, the jaded merchant or the ardent student of Japanese romance may find his most exacting ideas of peace and quiet realised. Approach not too near the statue, for the Browns, Joneses, and Robinsons have cut, chalked, scrawled, and painted their names and sentiments over every inch within reach, and sensibilities are likely to be wounded by the presence of such traces of Vandalism in so sweet a spot. Go not on a Saturday or Sunday, for pic-nic parties abound there, and we may be sickened with the sight of a party of half-drunk sailors or low-class tourists making the day hideous with their shrieks and songs.

But get away quietly during the middle of the week ; start from Inoshima in early morning, and enjoy the quiet and peace of the place safe from interference, wander about the once sacred groves, and make the old priest tell the legends attached to the building of the great Buddha.

In all directions there is something romantic, something beautiful, something pleasing to see, and by far the pleasantest mode of making a holiday fruitful in delightful associations and reminiscences is to shoulder one's pack and to wander away at will. In Japan the explorer and wanderer away from the beaten tracks sees far more than the tourist who follows the cut-and-dried routes ; for the very charm of the country and its inhabitants is their eccentricity, and the abundance of startling or pleasing effects where they may be least looked for. Along the coast one may roam for miles and miles, stepping out briskly on the hard firm sand, invigorated by the fresh open breeze, and gladdened by the sunshine and gaiety of all around. There are numberless subjects for the pencil of the artist in the little fishing villages scattered about : the great picturesque junks high and dry on the shore, or lazily dancing at anchor close off the land ; the bright-eyed bare-legged women with their baskets of fish ; the sturdy bronzed fishermen mending their nets, or chattering and gesticulating in groups ; the flocks of naked big-headed urchins sprawling amidst old anchors, piles of cordage, and weather-beaten wreckage. Let the traveller behave properly, and he will be treated with all civility

by these rude simple dwellers by the sea. The best room in the humble inn, the best and simplest of cooking, the most willing and attentive service, may be obtained at the smallest of prices, and with it all the brightest of smiles and the utmost readiness to do all that is required ; so that this aimless roaming forms one of the pleasantest features of the brief holiday.

And far away inland amongst the many-coloured hills, through the great woods of sweet-scented pine or graceful bamboo, along the rocky margins of brawling torrents, by pleasant valleys of waving green, the same air of peace and solitude remains supreme. Life jogs on just as it has for hundreds of years, undisturbed by innovations or by the effects of the bad side of civilisation so called, and the pervading atmosphere is that of dreamland. In the little heavy thatched temples, hidden amidst dense groves of trees, one may always be sure of a night's accommodation and simple rural fare. The priests, more intelligent than the ordinary run of rustics, are invaluable as cicerones and repositories of quaint old-world lore ; and although their inquisitiveness about matters European may be at times a little tiring, one overlooks it in the very simplicity of their questions and answers.

So one may linger dreamily or actively, as one chooses, through the short span of holiday. The result is always the same : renewed health and vigour for work in the bustling Mrs. Grundy-ruled settlement, and a sighing that so pleasant and instructive a time has so quickly flown by.

H. F. A.

A FRENCH EXPERIENCE.

CHAPTER I.

‘But French girls are so doosid slow to talk to!’

Dolly Crawford, a little shrouded figure sitting on the flabby deck of a plunging Channel steamer, heard the withering dictum of this announcement, and raised her eyes to take a considerative look at the speaker. It was a tall limp young man, with weak whiskers and undecided shoulders, who was standing near her, chewing the end of a dog’s-head walking-stick; and the remark was addressed to a most pronounced specimen of the English school of fast young lady, who—tall, straight as a grenadier, erect, and lanky, in brownish ulster and Cambridge hat, likewise chewing the end of *her* walking-stick—looked considerably the more mannish of the two. You may see hundreds of such young women—worse luck!—on any given Channel steamer you choose to travel by; you may meet them—more’s the pity!—at any railway station or hotel at home or abroad; you may run against fifties of them—alas!—in any known quarter of Europe or America—nay, even Asia and Africa too, for aught I know—such is the alarming increase of the genus in these perplexing days of the Woman Question. They seem, I grieve to say, as the type of all that is startling and *pas comme il faut* to their continental sisters; they certainly are the abhorrence and avoidance of the more right-minded of their own; and as for the opinion of men—

Dolly Crawford, I say, listening to the appalling ultimatum above recorded, wondered in her mind whether she too would soon be obliged to indorse young Oxford’s observation; for she is on her way to spend some time among the very class so maligned. She has four young brothers and sisters at home, and a not over-strong widowed mother. She is full of the determination to learn as much French as she possibly can in return for her own English, as then she will be able perhaps to enter on a remunerative engagement on her return. She has heard, through friends, of a desirable French family willing to receive her; and she is now on her way, a little nervous and trembling, it must be confessed, to enter it. She is twenty-two years of age, and not what would be called exactly pretty, perhaps, though very ‘taking’ in her own little round caressing way; but she is considered quite capable enough to fight her own way alone in the world, though it must be confessed she would give anything at this moment not to be forced by circumstances to do it. However, as every one says, it is nothing very formidable—only to teach English to and companionise a girl of her own age, an only daughter and an heiress, living in a pretty town in Normandy; and many girls would jump at such a chance. Dolly’s spirit did ‘jump’ at it—only, as I said, her flesh was a little fearful: but she will get over that. To distract her thoughts she further observes the two in front of her.

‘How d’ye mean?’ asks the

Cambridge hat, in answer to Oxford's late remark, as it fixes a penetrating 'Don't-take-me-in' sort of eye upon its companion, wheeling round upon him on one heel to do so.

'Why, don't you know? they haven't got two ideas of their own, or so you'd think, at any rate; but see them afterwards, some time when mamma's back is turned, and, O my! don't they flirt their heads off just! Now, give me a jolly downright sort of English girl, who says what she means, and then, you know, you know what you're about.'

'Hum, is that your own experience, Charley? Do the French young ladies fire away on you, then? Shouldn't I like to see them!'

Oxford frames his mouth into a dubious expression intended to convey much or anything, and looks away with simpering eye over the billowy expanse of churning waters with modest deprecation. It is not for *him* to boast of Parisian eyes of favour; and, after all, is he not speaking to a simple English girl? He turns the conversation.

'I say, Bessy, aren't you rather hungry? Wouldn't you like a chop or some oysters, or something?'

'Oysters! No, I should think not! If you want anything, go down and get it; *I* want a constitutional.' So saying, Cambridge thrusts her cane under one arm, and, burying both hands in capacious pockets, turns to walk up and down the deck with vigorous action.

Dolly detaches her attention to other quarters.

Two or three limp and lanky young ladies are seated huddled together in shawls and waterproofs afar off; a few stout papas and mammas are reducing refractory children to order; five or six elderly young ladies (evidently literary) are studiously buried in

periodical literature; three bearded ulstered bachelors smoke cigars on the hurricane-deck. Dolly soon gets tired of it all, and, if it must be confessed, also a little queer. She is no heroine, this young person, and so retires down-stairs to try to forget her woes in sleep. Six or seven hours pass thus; when a tremendous bumping and thumping of heavy articles overhead and ringing and clanking of chains announce the arrival at port. The horrible thud-thud of those tiresome engines ceases, steps hurry overhead, hoarse calls in French and English are exchanged, and, lo, the Channel voyage is over.

'Ere we are, miss!' announces the friendly stewardess, popping her head in at the door. 'You had better come up on deck.' It is the last English voice Dolly hears, for as she ascends on deck, lo, she is in a new world. A motley crowd is assembled on the pier to watch the landing. Lively swearing porters in light-blue trousers, with sun-burnt faces, and black moustaches whose heavy sweeping curves would not disgrace the most elegant of our cavalry officers—who does not know the difference between a French and English moustache?—pour down upon them, and, after the fussy ordeal of the gendarmes is fairly over, deftly pick up the luggage and deposit it, with many gesticulations, on the various vehicles. The stout papas brandish umbrellas and get purple in the face under the effort to make those confounded fellows understand their destinations; the stout mammas, as well as the preservation from a watery death of six out of the eight children will allow them, kindly bring to bear the aid of female and British eloquence; the limp young ladies, each in an ulster and capacious hat at the back of her head, place flat thin

feet on the causeway and skip ashore; the bearded bachelors throw away cigar ends and languidly follow. Dolly, if she had had the experience of six months later, if she could have viewed this scene with eyes made clear by the needle-like incision of French vision, would have laughed heartily at the complete picture of this most 'English' company; as it was, tired and a little lonely, she had only energy to pack herself away in a corner of the huge omnibus, and direct them to take her to the railway station as soon as possible. There in due course she arrived, having only been charged seventy-five centimes too much for her one little box and self—but *que voulez-vous? c'est une Anglaise*; and in five minutes more was speeding along through a softly rich country, the abode of fertility and peace, towards her destination.

In about another hour it was reached. Ten minutes more and she is rattling along high, narrow, irregular streets; past funny-looking little shops, which she afterwards discovered contain the very gem and acme of taste in their various commodities; up a straight formal road, bordered with little toy elm-trees, and between every two the railed *grille* of a shut-in mansion,—up this road, I say, for fifty yards, and then, clack! the vehicle stops short, the driver jumps down, opens the door, and prays Madame to descend. Poor little Madame does so, and gazes in a bewildered sort of way at the iron-work huge door in the wall, through the interstices of which a paved court filled with greenery is visible. The driver pulls a bell, is paid his fee (double), and drives off just as the big door opens and the *bonne* arrives. A French *bonne*! Who does not know that perfection in maids (to look at) which those words conjure up? Black-eyed, rosy,

smiling, with neat hair smoothed away under the crimped and spotless 'bonnet,' the loose jacket, the black-stuff petticoat, the snowy apron, and the sunbeam smile—all these return to me and to many at the name. Eugénie hopes Mademoiselle 'is not too fatigued? *Dieu, que c'est un long voyage!* but she must be well tired,' and so chattering conducts her through the green court in at the hall-door, where all is spotless purity and *ciréd* barrenness. François is sent to fetch the box. At the noise, the stir of their arrival, the parlour-door opens, and a sallow-faced black-haired fashionable lady of about forty-five presents herself; behind her a stout gentleman with a red face and white moustache; behind him again a tall young lady in faultless black costume. All three are immensely polite and welcoming. Madame takes her hand, and, drawing her into the *salon*, seats her next the fire; Monsieur places a footstool, and is sure she must be tired, very; Mademoiselle looks sympathetic, but says little. Dolly is tired and exhausted and hungry; and it is a fearful effort to her to respond to all this palaver and amiability. She can hardly speak any French either, which is very embarrassing, and it is so stupid to keep on smiling and saying, 'Non, O non, merci,' or else, 'Oui, Madame,' *ad nauseam*. Seeing this dilemma, Monsieur gallantly throws himself into the breach.

'I not speak Inglish much, miss,' he observes, bowing and throwing open his hands before a very large black-silk waistcoat; 'but I speak it one leetle. I most 'appy to speak it you *always*.'

Dolly thanks him and tries to feel as grateful as the obligation demands. Before the day is over she has reason to thank Heaven that the other members of the

family do not share the paternal accomplishment, for the floodgates once set open, the old gentleman's obligingness on that head knows no bounds. She is taken presently up-stairs to a neat little bare chamber, containing a bed by accident, and washing accommodation out of absence of mind, or so it appears, from the draped concealed appearance of the one, and the ridiculous smallness and scantiness of the other, shut away in a mahogany chest, in the lid of which a small looking-glass is fixed. But over the magnificent *cheminée* is another and a most gorgeous affair, all gilt and ornamentation; lovely lace curtains drape the windows, and the pattern of the dark-blue paper matches everything in the room, even to the penwiper on the *secrétaire*. Dolly is more than content, and, once rested and refreshed, the elasticity of youth reasserts itself, and she is quite inclined to be in love with her new surroundings. *Le dîner* is now ready, and she is handed in by Monsieur with every mark of deference, and seated at his right hand. There is *bouillon*, of course, and after it, stewed filet de bœuf, exquisitely tasting and tender; then a boiled fowl and some wonderful sauce; then pears, apples, creams, cheese, biscuits, Bordeaux, coffee, and liqueurs—all the while much talking, exclamation, and enjoyment. But every hot course is served out on tiny cold plates; there is only one fork used throughout, and—O horrors!—not a potato even! Plenty of salad, and more than plenty of salad-oil; but every one knows that that only refrigerates a not over-hot plateful at first, and of course one has to get used to it. Dolly, however, is not very particular—indeed, I fear the tenderness of that filet is wasted on her—and takes it all in good part as 'novelty.' Monsieur

spreads his *serviette* over his chest and enjoys a good dinner; Madame wipes her fork on hers, and ripples over with small talk; Mademoiselle, being as yet only a *jeune fille*, takes no active part in the conversation, but trips about when anything is wanted, and holds her tongue. Eugénie the *bonne* fore-stalls everybody's wants. It is all so simple, so unpretentious, so well-bred, so foreign, and so amusing, that Dolly is charmed. She is ready even to forgive Monsieur when he sucks his fingers, when dinner is over, and then wipes them on the indispensable *serviette*. She affects not to see Eugénie wipe the custard-spoons on her apron, and re-present them for confitures. It is all so primitive, so simple, and so French, she adores it already.

In the *salon* after dinner, Madame, who is by way of an invalid, reclines on the sofa; Monsieur remains in the *salle* with a cigar (*six* she afterwards discovers); Mademoiselle, in a gentle limp sort of way, devotes herself to her amusement. She is tall, this Mademoiselle, and, for a Frenchwoman, thin; she is plain, decidedly, being sallow, like her mother, with too pronounced features and not over good teeth; she carries more than her real age, partly through delicate health induced by an indoor life, and, if she were an Englishwoman, would probably be placed past recall among the category 'uninteresting,' and, later on, 'maiden lady.' Being French, all this is redeemed by a certain vivacity of dark eye and crimped hair, faultless dressing, and regulated movement of body and limbs natural to her race. Dolly did not dislike her; nay, as she said to herself, perhaps in time might even grow fond of her. In the course of the evening she left the room, evidently a concerted arrangement

with her mother, and Madame raised herself on the couch and opened battery on Dolly.

'You will see, Mademoiselle, that our daughter is extremely delicate; her health is not strong at all, at all; she needs care and study. It is for this reason we have sought a young girl to be with her, to companionise her, to direct her in fact, for my own health is not equal to the effort. Our doctor, an excellent boy, he said to me only yesterday, "Madame, what Mademoiselle requires is fresh air, cheerful companionship, amusement; give her these, and she will be strong." But there, what will you? My good young lady, I have not the health or the time to give her all this. It is you therefore who will be kind enough to do it. You, who are so capable, you will read with her, you will teach her English, you will walk with her, you will play duets together, you will, *enfin*, be friends together; for she loves you much, she has told me so already, and it is a charming thing that kind Heaven has sent you to us.' Here she paused out of breath, and Dolly struck in: she would be very glad to be of any use to Mademoiselle; she would do her best.

'It is not for the sake of the English only, Mademoiselle, that you have been good enough to come to us; O no, for that M. Delmaine is perfectly equal to teaching her, and, indeed, has often, often talked of doing so. He reads and translates your language beautifully, beautifully; but he is scarcely equal to the fatigue in fact, and it is a young girl of her own age Louise requires. She is exceedingly clever, my daughter—O, quite advanced. She is accustomed to think and act for herself quite in the *English* way, I tell her; for, you know, your young girls do as they choose

more than ours, my dear Mademoiselle; it is the spirit of your nation. M. Delmaine says it is the spirit of Protestantism; but that I know nothing about. We, however, we hear they do, and Louise is wild to go to England. But for that, I tell her, she must wait—wait a little—until, perhaps, somebody else takes her; for, my dear young lady, I will now tell you a little piece of news you ought, perhaps, to know in advance. It is that our daughter is affianced—yes, affianced, to an excellent partner—*un bon garçon tout à fait*—one who will make her exceedingly happy. He resides in this town with his only sister; he has a charming house; it is an excellent marriage. You will see him soon; but he is now in Paris on some business; he will be home in a week, then we shall be happy. But Louise, believe me, will not consent to be married immediately; no, figure to yourself that she refuses to listen to his representations, to all our representations; some young girl's folly or other. O, she is very *entêtée*, is Louise; but she says no, no, wait a little; and he, he is an angel, he waits. I tell her it is monstrous conduct; but she persists, though he is most attentive. We have had so many demands for my daughter; but M. Delmaine has refused them every one but this one, because M. Emil Gérard is an excellent *parti*, and such an excessively good *garçon*. But I tire you, my good demoiselle; you have need of your bed; go, I implore of you; do not make the ceremony; go to your room, Louise will conduct you.' And Louise coming in at the moment, followed by her papa, all three joined their entreaties that Mademoiselle would have the goodness to repose herself after the terrible fatigues of her long journey.

'We have the pleasure you show our pretty town morrow the morning, my good young lady,' cries Monsieur, coming very near her and smelling horribly of smoke. 'Me take you show ze lions, ha, ha, ha!' and he rubs his hands and shows much baldness of head as he finally bows his farewell ceremonies at the door. 'Une charmante petite fille,' he says, returning to the bosom of his family; 'n'est-ce pas que nous avons bien fait, nous, ma femme?'

Madame and Mademoiselle were quite of the same opinion.

CHAPTER II.

DOLLY opened her eyes the next morning to a day of brilliant sunshine. And sunshine was in her thoughts as well. How pleasant is that stolen five minutes of morning reverie snatched by the wicked from the righteous toil of daily duty! Talk as one may against the iniquity of the thing, the laziness, the selfishness, the idleness, and the other sinful *nesses* that all pious folk tell us the practice involves, who does not know the content, the peacefulness, and the calm enjoyment of that five minutes, blessed beyond all the other five minutes of the day? It is then that luxurious recollection of the past day's doings visits one; it is then that soothing plans of the approaching one are mentally mapped and made. I am not, I fear, among the pious folk, for I love my morning dreams dearly. And Dolly's were tinged with hope and youth. She liked these good, fussy, kind people. She felt equal to the task lying before her. She was full of golden visions of emolument awaiting her at the end of this experience. She thought her-

self a most fortunate girl. After all, things go by comparison. Here was this French girl, with a moneyed future before her, engaged to be married to a charming man, no little growing-up brothers and sisters to think about, no cares of any kind, but taking it all so placidly, and not even seeming the happier for it! Well, it was a queer world. Little Dolly had no fortune that she had ever heard of coming to *her*, unless it dropped upon her one fine day from the skies; and as for a lover,—well, she had had her little fancies, as what other young woman already arrived at the age of two-and-twenty has not? But two out of the three were as poor as herself; and the third, after nearly breaking her heart by doing everything *but* speaking, suddenly went off and emigrated to Canada without so much as a good-bye. That was nine months ago now, and Dolly is determined to have nothing more to do with the faithless sex, either mentally or morally, but to live out her life, and do her duty in it as faithfully as she could, and not trouble her head about so visionary a thing as happiness. How many people set out on the same virtuous determination! And how many, alas, narrow down at last to the direful prose such determination too often ends in! But when Fortune *will* step in with fairy favour, and suddenly gild the gray horizon, how astonishingly soon the sons and daughters of Duty accommodate themselves to the golden change! Full of the first virtuous reflections, however, our little Anglaise descends soberly to the *salle*, and is received by Monsieur with happy flourish of trumpets, and the remark that 'the morning sunshine has arrived.' How embarrassingly fond of compliments is this amiable gentleman! Dolly can hardly hinder a smile as she

regards him. Monsieur is attired in a gorgeously flowing flowered dressing-gown, a yellow-silk handkerchief round his neck, and his feet thrust into green-and-gold slippers. He explains that Madame's health is so unfortunately delicate as to forbid her descending so early, and that she *déjeunes* in her own room. 'Ma fille,' however, presently enters, just as faultlessly dressed as on the previous evening, and the three partake of *café au lait* and bread-and-butter. The second *déjeuner* is at twelve o'clock, and until that hour the two girls retire to a pretty little morning-room, and commence their studies. Mademoiselle is painstaking and persevering, not by any means clever; Dolly is very earnest and unselfish. The two make rapid progress, at any rate in each other's acquaintance and good opinion, if not in English prose, and both are equally surprised at the rapidity with which *midisounds*. By that hour Madame is in the *salle* all ready to receive them, but clad in a wondrous *peignoir*, and in a state of incompleteness as to coiffure which much shocks our Dolly, who is not yet used to French ways and appearances. But Madame's health again is so delicate, so very delicate, that she never dresses herself before the afternoon, and she hopes this kind young lady will excuse her? So saying she wipes a soup-plate with the ever-useful *serviette*, and proceeds to serve the soup. English eyes open a little more over this second meal, but still there is a glamour over everything. Monsieur, it is true, has the reprehensible habit of taking snuff between the courses, and is very noisy over his Bordeaux. Madame carves the fowl on her own plate, Dolly is nearly sure with her own knife; all three elevate their bones, and unmistakably enjoy them *aux doigts*. Still, the kindness and the hospitality

are unflagging, and the stranger is made to feel most thoroughly at ease. Monsieur is excessively curious about English habits and customs, about the relation of which he proceeds to question Dolly, much as one might a native from the utmost region of Kamschatka.

'You love your Queen in England?' he asks, as, the weightier labours of the meal over, he helps himself with finger and thumb to a very big lump of sugar, and meditatively stirs his coffee. 'You fear not the Revolution?'

Dolly thinks on the whole not; on which he launches into unbounded admiration of so extraordinary a country.

'It is a good thing there are no other gentlemen here,' whispers Mademoiselle, smiling; 'my father *surexcites* himself always in talking politics with them; but my mother and I fortunately are of the same opinion with him.'

'Yes, Mademoiselle, we are all Legitimists here, and we are not afraid to say it; for me, I desire but one thing—that all Republicans should be guillotined, ha, ha!'

'Calm thyself, calm thyself, my dear,' says Madame languidly; 'my nerves are but feeble, and to-day is my "reception," thou art aware.'

'Great Heaven, ma femme; thou hast reason. I grieve for that, because I fear these poor young ladies must remain within to-day in consequence?'

'It would be but polite,' says Madame; and so, accordingly, it is arranged, to Dolly's great disappointment. Nevertheless the afternoon proves sufficiently amusing. An hour later, Madame descends in faultless violet-and-black cashmere; Mademoiselle in gray. The *salon* is arranged for visitors, with all the wool-work armchairs in a circle under the chandeliers, footstools before each, and a general air of elegance and ceremony

falls upon the entire household. Madame Delmaine's weekly day of reception was an important affair in the town. Dolly, intensely interested, but a little nervous, awaits the opening of the drama; she feels horribly 'English' and in the way, and is destined to feel still more so as the time goes on, so voluble, so vivacious, so loud, and so alarming does the company strike her; but fortunately everybody has such a wonderful amount to say that nobody pays much attention to her. That is what strikes her more than anything—the astonishing volubility. One would think all these dear friends had hardly met for six months, instead of being in the daily habit of seeing one another at intervals; but the repartee, the sally, the news, the challenge, and the counter challenge, roll so deftly from one tongue to another that it is impossible to catch the half. While she is answering one remark half a dozen others have intervened; and at last she gives it up in despair, and thinks never, never will she understand this most confusing of languages. She is presented with great ceremony to each individual member, and all make some courteous remark; but most, after a while, attributing her quiet answers to English gravity and spleen, turn their attention to each other. Dolly is but too grateful for this, and would have given anything, I think, to have only *listened* to the scene from one of Madame's *armoires*. She noticed that all the young ladies spoke little; that all the young married ladies were very gay, and talked and laughed much more; that Monsieur did the gallant to every fair dame in the room; that all the gentlemen were polite to a fault; but that the innuendoes and the conversation (half at least of which she lost) generally took a

turn which would have raised the hair on many pious English heads. But when she found courage to raise her eyes to observe the effect of these various remarks, none was to be seen—simply none; a glance, a pause, and the idea is lightly shaken off, to give place to the next comer, on the thistledown surface of fairy wings. There was one lady there who immensely interested, and it must be confessed rather repulsed, her. She was the wife of the Colonel of the regiment then quartered in the town; a plump pretty-looking woman of forty, with rouged cheeks and ringlets of glossy black hair, on the top of which a lace hat was coquettishly placed, under the raised brim of which two large black-and-white daisies nestled caressingly; she carried in a well-gloved hand two lovely hothouse flowers; a beautiful little foot reposed, well in sight, on her tapestry footstool. Dolly noticed all these minutiae thoroughly; she could not take her attention off this novel specimen. Look where she would, she saw the flashing eyes, pearly teeth, and *mignonne* features of this most attractive-looking personage, and heard the loud laugh and brilliant sally which kept pace with her appearance. Madame St. Pierre, she afterwards heard, was a Bretonne, which fact appeared to excuse much license in Norman eyes, and was acknowledged to be the prettiest woman in the town. Dolly saw and heard quite enough to sober her. M. le Colonel did not put in an appearance; but Madame found quite enough to amuse her in a couple of junior officers, who were no doubt paying devoted court, vicariously, to their commander-in-chief. Report said the Colonel, who was sixty, and as yellow as a guinea, from a long course of Cochin China, was furiously jealous. Next la Colonelle.

was a small, spare, wizened little lady, of dejected expression and much repressed demeanour. Dolly took a vast interest in her as she caught the name, 'Mademoiselle Gérard;' but she was positively over fifty and excessively plain. Many inquiries after her brother elicited the news that he would arrive home in three days. Not a muscle of Mdlle. Delmaine's face moved. One would have said she had not heard the announcement.

'What an icicle!' said Dolly to herself. But a few minutes afterwards, when the conversation turned upon a poor man who had been run over in the street and nearly killed, leaving a wife and two little children, among the many 'O ciels!' and 'Mon Dieu, que c'est donc horribles!' which flew around, her lips only were silent, but her eyes were full of tears.

The company kept streaming, streaming in, and Madame's little *salon* became full to overflowing. Madame herself, elegant, sparkling, and amusing, kept up the ball of conversation as only a French hostess can, and Dolly arrived at the conclusion that probably her nerves and her health were alike put off and resumed at pleasure.

'She's a humbug,' said stout little Dolly to herself, with British candour.

Yes, of all the family she liked Mademoiselle the best. See her now, politely answering that very foolish elderly gentleman, who evidently, as his manner indicates, is pouring into her ear an interminable string of profuse compliment and flowering jargon; but she is only just enduring it, that is all, and Monsieur had better take his wares elsewhere.

'Do I adore flowers? Ah, Mademoiselle,' he is saying, in a sort of ecstatic rapture, 'I only adore one thing—woman, amiable woman! But yes, still I love

flowers; they are emblems to me of love and pleasure.' In this way the amiable fool is running on, to Dolly's intense amusement and Mdlle. Delmaine's intense disapproval, when the door is suddenly thrown open, and an astonishing event descends upon the company. Coming hastily in, puffing and panting, but still with a certain ponderous dignity of carriage, is an immense individual, clad in thick greatcoat and woollen scarf. He carries in his hand an umbrella, which nearly drops to the ground as he blankly surveys the company.

'Ah, great Heaven!' he murmurs plaintively, 'if I had not forgotten it is the reception-day of Madame!' Then hastily recovering himself, with true French vivacity he advances smiling towards the hostess. If chère Madame will excuse a giddy traveller for thus intruding? For his part, he is truly grateful to have the opportunity of meeting so many good friends. Chère Madame most certainly has already done so, for she advances towards him in a sort of rapture, extending a welcoming hand which is devotedly saluted. Then Monsieur comes forward, and—yes! the two men absolutely embrace; at which Dolly can hardly restrain a smile, for both are enormously stout and very nearly of an age; and then he turns to Mademoiselle, who is quietly standing up to receive him, with the faintest of blushes on a grave face.

'May I be permitted?' he says, and bends over the long fingers. Mademoiselle colours up and looks disapproving; mamma hastens to the rescue and applies a hundred questions. This, then, is the lover! Yes, this is M. Emil Gérard, who has unexpectedly finished his business in Paris sooner than he expected, and hastened home on

wings of rapture to greet the family of his beloved.

By this time the room begins to clear—even Mademoiselle Gérard, who, perhaps, has not appeared as overjoyed to see her brother as might have been expected, has taken a frigid leave—and the family are left to entertain the new-comer.

‘Will you take a friendly dinner with us, *en famille*?’ asks Madame, beaming from her daughter to him and back again.

Monsieur Emil is overjoyed, charmed; but Mademoiselle does nothing more than faintly echo the polite invitation. He is presented in due form to Dolly, and is charmed, enraptured, to have the happiness of meeting her; he seems already to claim a sort of possession over her; for is she not a belonging of his angel? Then he retires into the vestibule, and divests himself of his *paletot* and mufflers, and comes back beaming, holding several parcels in his hands, besides an enormous bouquet.

Dolly now takes a quiet survey of him, and is almost appalled at what she finds. Well, he is perhaps a few inches smaller when out of his greatcoat, but still what one could term nothing else but enormous. Big every way—immense shoulders, short arms, large head, no neck to speak of, bald—yes, bald, and moreover so ridiculously like M. Delmaine that she no longer wonders at the coolness of his *fiancée*. M. Delmaine’s moustache is white, and M. Gérard’s is grizzled, that is all the difference; there can hardly be ten years between them; and both are so absurdly fat and smiling and uninteresting, that it is a great trial to her self-control to see them bowing to and complimenting each other.

What Dolly especially disliked of all in poor M. Gérard was perhaps his boots, which were of a light-brownish yellow (the tops),

and laced up the side, but perfectly fitting and, for his size, excessively small. Glancing next at his hands, however, she almost transferred her disapproval towards them—so large, so soft, and so ‘plummy,’ were these ugly extremities, and garnished with horribly long filbert nails.

Poor Mademoiselle Delmaine! Here, indeed, was a rent in her rosy future which no imagination could get over, and the four little brothers and sisters at home seemed gilded in comparison. Poor M. Gérard, little cognisant of the unfavourable impression he was making, blithely undid his paper parcels, and, laying them open on the table, placed the bouquet in the middle, and offered them all figuratively at his lady’s feet.

‘See here, what magnificence! The kind thought of our excellent friend. My Louise, art thou, then, not happy?’ cries Madame, clasping her hands in a rapturous ecstasy, and lifting grateful eyes to heaven. But Louise is not by any means so overcome with gratitude as duty expects of her.

M. Gérard has gone up towards her, and is attempting to conduct her forwards to the inspection; but she resists, and a few low hasty words of conversation pass between them. Dolly heard a snatch or two of it.

‘I forbid you to do so; I am annoyed; I am in anger,’ murmured Mademoiselle hurriedly; and, ‘But you will pardon me, my angel; I could not help it,’ came from him. Then she slowly and impatiently came forward, and looked down at the presents with pouting lips.

‘What will Mademoiselle say to me?’ she says, half laughing. ‘She will think I am a baby with all these toys;’ and she disdainfully lifts a coral necklace from its case.

'But ah, heaven, it is lovely! Great skies, how it is superb!' cries Madame. 'Mademoiselle can but think thee a very fortunate young girl to receive so many kind presents. What an *agrafe*! Figure to thee, *mon cher*,' turning to her husband, 'an *agrafe* set in amethyst! And here is a fan the most exquisite. *Mon Dieu*, what a fan!'

In this way Madame gloated over the treasures so despised, and I think she was right. They were indeed excessively pretty, and all in good taste. There happened to be two little brooches in the form of keys, one in silver and one in black and gold; both were brought for approval. Mademoiselle was to choose which she preferred. She hesitated a moment, beckoned to her mother, and whispered a few words. M. Emil was called to the consultation, at which he assisted by many emphatic nods, bows, and assenting smiles. Then he looked towards Dolly, and beamed approval as Madame came forward and addressed her.

'My daughter begs to speak to you, Mademoiselle,' says Madame graciously; and M. Emil gallantly hands her forward.

'If Mademoiselle will do me the honour to accept this little trifle,' says he, holding up the black-and-gold key-brooch, 'it will afford me the most great happiness, and I venture to suggest it will also do pleasure to her friend;' and he glances oglingly at his *fiancée*, who looks at Dolly and says, 'Certainly yes,' with the kindest of smiles.

How good, how kind, they all are to her! How she loves this amiable family! She accepts the brooch, blushing, and wears it down to dinner in a pretty lace cravat, which provokes general admiration. M. Gérard's, indeed, is rather marked; he stares at her more than a little; but Dolly knows

it is on account of her relations with his lady-love.

She is asked to play after dinner, and does so. M. Gérard is also a musician; performs, indeed, on the flute, and adores the art. Here again is another bond of union. His *fiancée* is awkward at the piano, and can never be induced to play before any one. Mademoiselle must draw her out—must make her play duets. 'She will soon make progress with so charming a mistress.'

'Mademoiselle, sings she at all?' asks M. Delmaine, beginning to air his one accomplishment of language among all this talk of cultivation.

'A little, Monsieur,' says Dolly.

'O, den she will be enough good.' Monsieur runs to the piano and opens it once more. He can see that his son-in-law is more than struck by this unlooked-for evidence of skill; M. Emil indeed stands open-mouthed, staring at the fair performer. 'Dank you, mees,' comes presently from his parted lips; and at the sound it is Monsieur's turn to stare.

'*Vous parlez Anglais*, Gérard?' he murmurs helplessly, leaning against the piano for support. '*Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*'

'O yez, O yez. Von leetle, my friend,' returns M. Gérard; and he grins an awful grin at Dolly, and makes her, of course, a bow.

It is more than Dolly can stand. 'O dear, whatever am I to do,' she says to herself, 'if these two awful old men are going to pepper me always with their English?'

The ludicrous view of the case is quite lost on practical Miss Dolly.

'What, then, Emil also speaks the English!' cries mamma, enraptured. 'Great Heaven, but that, then, is magnificent! O my Louise, that you will have happiness in speaking together!'

But Louise looks terrifically

severe at this suggestion, and it is M. Gérard who has to respond to the raptures.

'M. Gérard will be so happy—O, so happy—to accompany this charming family to view the beauties of the town to-morrow!' And, in fact, does so, though Mademoiselle hardly speaks a word to him all day. Perhaps she was tired from the effect of her morning exertions; for Dolly, on coming down to breakfast, had met her in company with Eugénie entering the front-door from a walk. It was from Eugénie they heard that Mademoiselle had been to visit the hospital, to see the poor man who had been so severely hurt the day before, and had spent nearly an hour by his bedside, seeking out and relieving his wretched family on the way home. Anyway, she has not much gaiety left for M. Emil. But he does not seem to miss it. He laughs and chatters gaily to everybody, and looks a great deal more often than is at all necessary at Dolly, and quite makes up for others' silence.

M. and Madame Delmaine fortunately cannot walk far, and the expedition soon comes to an end. Dolly has been shown the town-hall, and walked round the Jardin des Plantes, and admired the lovely view from all parts of the heights, and then they come in.

M. Emil's reward is an invitation to dinner again, which it is needless to say he accepts. Dolly thinks of the poor little frumpy sister mewed up all by herself at home, but nobody else seems to do so.

CHAPTER III.

AND so the days go on, and Dolly gets more accustomed to the odd, rambling, pleasant life,

and more to understand the limits of her duties. Mademoiselle she begins to grow really fond of; for the French girl, once over her shyness, begins to open out and show depths of real character and genuine affection. She, on her side, gets very fond of Dolly, and the three morning hours of study become hours of pleasure to them both. Not that she makes very much progress in her English. Dolly is in despair sometimes over those dreadful *th's*, and then the irregular verbs. She makes the most terrific faces over her efforts, and Dolly bursts out laughing, as our insular manner is, and Mademoiselle joins her, and the lesson becomes a joke; but still, Rome was not built in a day, and while there is life there is hope. And they have serious talks too sometimes; Mademoiselle is inclined to confidentialise.

'Do you ever marry gentlemen old enough to be your fathers in England?' she asked one day, at the end of the lesson, just as they were preparing to put up.

'Well,' said Dolly, considering, with the dictionary in her hand, 'I don't think we do often; not unless we love them, any way.'

'Love them!' echoed the French girl. 'What has that to do with it? My mamma says young girls should never *love* their *fiancés* before marriage; it would be a thing the most indelicate!'

'O,' says Dolly, 'French and English ways are so different. It's no use arguing over them. We never marry in England unless we love; at least, very seldom—only in the great world.'

Louise sighed deeply.

'Ah,' said she softly, 'if I lived in England?' After a pause, 'Would you advise a girl to marry if she did not care for a monsieur?' she asked.

'That depends,' answered Dolly,

'if she thought she ever could *grow* to care for him.'

'But if she felt she never could?'

'Then, certainly not. Better live single all her days.'

'But if it were the wish of her parents? If it were but a self-sacrifice, which our Church tells us is so holy?'

'No, no, no!' cried Dolly, with energy. 'Let her never listen to such a creed; it is throwing away two happinesses instead of one.'

But our Dolly had not much experience of these things, and spoke like the impulsive young creature she was. They were soon called to *déjeuner*.

'Here is a delightful project,' says Madame, as the soup goes round. 'We are all asked to spend the day in the gardens of the Château Montmorenci on Wednesday. It will be a charming day. Our good Emile has brought us tickets of entry; he will come with us himself, and Mademoiselle *sa sœur* also. Is it not amiable?'

'Very, very,' answers Monsieur, in the silence of the others. 'Yes, yes, we will have a charming day; we will show Mademoiselle the beauties of our landscape. You love *ze* country?' he asks, turning towards Dolly. 'Ah, I thought so. She loves the country. We will all enjoy ourselves.'

Mademoiselle said never a word.

M. Gérard came in the evening, fat and beaming as ever. It was arranged they were all to drive to the Château at one o'clock on Wednesday in two carriages.

Dolly was almost angry with her friend when she found that, through her contrivance, when the time came, it was Madame Delmaine, herself, and *le fiancé* in one *calèche*; and his sister, Louise, and her papa in the other. But she was still more furious with M.

Gérard when she discovered that, far from his resenting the arrangement, on the contrary he rather seemed to approve of it, to judge from the alacrity with which he helped her into the carriage, and the unctuous way with which he then proceeded to seat himself opposite, and let his eyes fix themselves upon her. Her disapproval of him began to change into aversion, which she took at last no pains to conceal; but the only effect it appeared to have upon him was to increase his ponderous efforts to please. Madame Delmaine at length appeared to notice something strange; for, immediately on arriving at the entrance to the Château, she arranged that the two girls should walk a little in advance alone. Dolly, only too thankful to escape, kept so close to her friend that there was no separating them; nor did she have any more of Monsieur's unwelcome attentions until collation-time at four o'clock, when they all assembled in a room at one of the lodges to partake of *pâté* and Bordeaux. Then again she became the victim of his increasing gallantries; and it was with unconcealed satisfaction that, after the meal was over, she succeeded in again separating herself with Louise, under a pretence of 'sketching' the very beautiful scenery which surrounded them. Louise could not sketch, but she stood watching with unfeigned interest the pretty drawing of a wing of the Château and background of noble chestnut-trees, which was rapidly growing into excellence under Dolly's skilled little hands, until a sudden accident threatened to put an end to the work of both performer and onlooker. The two girls were bending their heads closer together for a better inspection of the work, when a despairing exclamation from one broke the spell.

'O *ma chère*! See, I have upset your little water-can!'

The water was indeed all soaking into the rejoicing grass at their feet, and what was to be done?

'I must go and fetch some more,' said Dolly, rising, and laughing heartily. 'The good woman at the lodge will give me some, I have no doubt.'

'No, do let me!' eagerly interposed the other; and before she could be stopped she had seized the little bottle, and was off.

Dolly reseated herself, with a sigh of relief, and gazed at the beauty around her. How calm, how peaceful it all was! She fell into a reverie, which, however, did not last very long, for a thick shadow presently stood beside her; and there was M. Gérard, big, placid, and oily as ever. She was beginning to hate him.

'I fear I have had the misfortune to disturb Mademoiselle?' says he, in his softest accents. 'I come from Madame to announce our departure. She said I should find both you young ladies together.'

'O yes,' says Dolly, jumping up, and beginning to collect her materials in a great hurry. 'Did you not meet Mademoiselle? She has but this moment left me.'

'No. Ah, what excellence! Allow me;' and he takes the little drawing in his hand, darting a swift look intended to captivate. It only enrages her instead; but what can she do? She cannot snatch the drawing from him, and there he stands, still holding it, and consequently detaining them both.

'It is time to go,' she says impatiently at last; 'they will be waiting for us. Please give it me.'

'And what if they are waiting?' says M. Gérard coolly. 'Is it not of more importance to me to be speaking to you, you beautiful

English one, whom my eyes must have told I admire?'

She could hardly believe her ears. Was this indeed Mademoiselle's lover speaking?

'O,' she cried, shrinking away from him with instinctive horror, 'Monsieur, you must be mad! Hold your tongue this instant even!'

Rendered thus in English, the *taisez-vous à l'instant même* seems stripped of its command, and reduced almost to the ridiculous; but in French the words were accompanied with an imperious gesture which fully matched them. He seized her hand, and tried to kiss it, but Dolly, snatching it away as hurriedly, first turned upon him in a kind of fury, and then, not trusting herself to speak, rushed away in a white heat. M. Gérard laughed, stooped down, and, picking up her paint-box, nimbly followed. He was a Frenchman, and I daresay accustomed to such scenes. But the two had not gone many paces ere Madame Delmaine, suddenly coming into view, caught sight of the position in all its ambiguous bearings — Mademoiselle l'Anglaise, with angry face, running away, and her future son-in-law, cool and smiling, behind. But Madame was too true a Frenchwoman to have seen the affair. Not a ruffle disturbed the serenity of her rouged face as she politely saluted the pair; not a tone of her voice altered as she inquired of Dolly her success in art. Only on the way home it was somehow arranged that Louise and she exchanged places, in spite of the former's open objections, and Monsieur was *not* invited in to finish the evening.

And from that moment Dolly felt herself watched; watched as she had never before been in her life; watched covertly in a manner which made her blood boil

over even to think of. Yet what could she do? She dare not do what she would have wished—go openly and tell Madame or Mademoiselle about it. No, no; she felt she dare not. And so she went on from day to day in a miserable sort of state, sometimes longing she could go away—nay, almost resolved upon finding an excuse for so doing—and among all her incertitudes, only resolved upon one course of certain action, viz. that of completely avoiding the odious cause of her embarrassment. But this was not quite easy to do; for M. Gérard so pursued her with attentions, and so pestered her with amorous glances, and so thoroughly ignored all plainly-shown dislike to such proceedings, that it could no longer at last be kept a secret; and Dolly one fine morning determined on leaving her comfortable quarters.

With this end she made use of a conveniently-arrived letter from home, and announced the urgent need for her presence in the family circle with a sinking heart.

Alas, Madame only shrugged her shoulders, cast up her eyes, and observing, 'Mon Dieu, Mademoiselle, que c'est triste! mais s'il faut?' continued her soup.

Monsieur made many ejaculations of despair, and looked at his wife for further orders.

Mademoiselle got very red, murmured, 'Mais, mon Dieu, que ferons-nous?' and then cast her eyes on her plate, and grew very silent.

Dolly saw it was a hopeless case, so continued with a brave face but heavy heart:

'Yes, yes, I must really quit your kind roof. I am sorry, but my mother wishes me to come home, and at once. There is a steamer to-day, I think, from ———, and I will pack my boxes at once.' And directly *déjeuner* was over she left the room.

Well, it was all over, this happy French life, and now she must go back again to home-worries—nothing else for it; and a thousand anathemas were hurled at the offending head of the unlucky cause of her misfortunes. Then she set to work to repack her dresses, and arranged them, with many a heartache, in the old black trunk of English make and London name. As she was folding up the last a knock came at her door, and Mademoiselle entered.

'But this news is sudden,' she began, eyeing nervously the preparations, and in a constrained voice. Then flinging aside her ceremony manner, she went up close to Dolly, and clasped her two hands together on her shoulder. 'O my friend,' she murmured, in a choking odd sort of voice, 'I know what is driving you away; it is monstrous! it is horrible!'

'Do you?' said Dolly, gazing blankly at her, all her innocent little subterfuges destroyed. 'I beg your pardon, indeed I do; but it is not my fault.'

'I know it; I see it. But O, my dear friend, how I thank you for it!'

'Thank me for it?' echoed Dolly.

'Yes, thank you for it. You have relieved me of a nightmare.'

'What, then, she loves him after all!' said Dolly to herself.

'For my parents see it, we all see it,' went on Mademoiselle hurriedly; 'there is no longer any need for concealment; all is, all shall be, at an end between us now!'

'What? you mean to say you intend to break with M. Gérard?' asked Dolly, stupefied.

'But yes, certainly.'

'But—but tell me, Louise, did you love him?'

'Love him!' echoed the French girl, with contempt on every feature; '*Je le déteste!* Ah, *mon Dieu*, what am I saying?' she cor-

rected herself hastily ; 'the saints forgive me for that.'

Dolly impetuously kissed her.

'Then never marry him, dear,' she said.

'But I never mean to now ; my parents will see it. Ah, my dear, from what a fate have you not saved me !' and she heartily returned the kiss.

Then she went away, and Dolly finished her packing, and in an hour's time her adieus were said, and she was on her way once more in the wide world. She quitted — with terrible regret. As she got out of the train at the seaport whence the steamer started, a flushed and stout form descended from another carriage.

'Ah, dear miss,' it said as it hurried towards her, 'we meet again ! I heard at the house of your unfortunate departure, all alone, and I hastened to be able to offer my services to assist you on board your *bâteau*.'

'And did you tell Mdlle. Delmaine you were coming ?' asked Dolly, in a freezing tone, the only resource left her.

'But no, I did not mention that,' he stammered, as he offered to relieve her of her cloaks and bags.

'Thank you, Monsieur, I require no assistance whatever ; and allow me to add, I think this persecution most ungentlemanly and cowardly,' in grandiloquent tones.

'But, Mademoiselle, listen, for one instant only. Persecution you call it ? Nay, if you can but see the ardour, the true admiration with which I regard you ! One instant I beg of you !'

They had got into the waiting-room by this time, which was empty. Monsieur was quite ready to take advantage of the situation, and accordingly seized her hand, and was about vehemently to embrace it, when Dolly turned upon him in a fury.

'How dare you !' she cried, her eyes kindling — 'how dare you ! Do you think I don't know the relation in which you stand to Mdlle. Delmaine ? I am ashamed of you !'

'Mdlle. Delmaine ? Ah, la pauvre petite ! c'était bien une affaire de convenance, ça ; mais c'est vous, c'est vous, chère petite, que j'aime.'

But Dolly, staying to listen to no more, flew away, out at the door, down the passage, and straight into the first 'bus she could find, with a speed born of terror, disgust, and sense of the ludicrous combined. She alighted abruptly upon an old gentleman's feet, who mildly withdrew them and made way for her at his side ; and fortunately the 'bus that instant moved off and saved her. The last object she saw was the rueful figure of poor Monsieur, holding her umbrella still in his hand, and agonisingly scanning every fly and vehicle but the right one, in search, doubtless, of his charmer. Dolly, although she certainly regretted the loss of her umbrella, could now only laugh in her sleeve, and wonder if he would take it back to Mademoiselle.

TWO YEARS LATER.

Dolly safely reached her home, our readers may be glad to know, but is no longer Dolly Crawford. Six months after she was in England she received a letter from Canada, stating that the writer at last found himself in a fair way of making his fortune, and hoped his dear Dolly had not forgotten him, although he *had* found himself too miserable to bid her good-bye. It was her old lover come back to her. And Dolly had not quite forgotten him, and now is very happy indeed under the guise of a Canadian farmer's wife.

She gets occasional letters from her friend Louise Delmaine, who is still (according to her own wish)

unmarried, and likely to remain so. A month after Dolly left, the town was much electrified by the announcement that Madame St. Pierre, the dashing lady of the Colonel, had eloped with—M. Gérard! Report added, to escape a tyrant husband; but I doubt

myself whether the poor lady had not exchanged one tyrant for another. M. Delmaine still sends his respectful homages to the most fascinating of ‘Anglaises;’ but I do not think Madame has quite sufficiently forgiven her to add hers.

THE COURSE OF COURTSHIP.

I wooed my love with sweet gifts from the candied store,
When I had eight, she seven, summers seen;
Until her paling cheek declined all off’rings more,
And I did fear my suit had fatal been.

I wooed my love with apples from my garden tree,
When she eleven, I twelve, years had passed;
Until my little Eve did check my courtesy,
And tearful vowed that she had ta’en her last.

I wooed my love with verses from my am’rous quill,
When fifteen she, I sixteen, winters knew;
Until my Laura bade my ardent Muse be still,
And from her tuneful Petrarch bashful flew.

I wooed my love with trinkets of the goldsmith’s art,
When she nineteen, I twenty, years had run;
Until my credit failed the promptings of my heart,
And all my money, not my love, was done.

I wooed my love in polished periods of prose,
When five- and four-and-twenty years we reached;
Until she fixed her eyes upon her beating toes,
And asked me where I learned had to preach.

I wooed my love with wealth and carriages-and-pairs,
When five years more had aged us lovers both;
She wanted rank and station, and, assuming airs
Of Clara Vere de Vere, to wed was loth.

I wooed my love with titles, orders, wounds, and fame,
When half a century had o’er us rolled;
But now she called bright honour but an empty name,
As, devotee, her beads she hourly told.

And now I woo my love with memory’s regret,
For I have touched the Psalmist’s utmost score;
And her no thoughts of earth nor of the future fret,
For she is dead these twenty years and more.

CLUB CAMEOS.

The Old School.

THERE are few things more distressing to a reflective mind than the attitude which the Church of England has assumed within the last generation. Disguise the matter as much as we may, there can be no doubt of the fact that the Anglican Church is fast becoming a Romish institution. In spite of the bench of bishops, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the decisions of the courts of law, many of our clergy preach to their congregations the creed pure and simple of the Roman Catholic Church. Enter many of our places of worship in London and in our country towns, and, unless told to the contrary, we might imagine that we were under the sway of the Vatican. The altar is gorgeously draped and lighted; incense renders the air heavy and sickly; the consecrated elements are held aloft for adoration; confession is openly taught from the pulpit and practised in the aisles; the clergy, not content with the title of priest, insist upon the designation of 'father;' banners with strange devices hang against the walls; and forms and ceremonies unknown to the Establishment are freely introduced into the services.

Between Ritualism on the one hand and Research on the other, it seems to me that the dear old Church of England of my youth must fall to the ground. It was once the pride of Englishmen to regard the creed they professed as the best and purest of all religions. It was manly without being destructive; it was Catholic with-

out mummery; it was warmly attached to the State, and its teachers were gentlemen. Can the same now be said of the Church of England? In one parish we see a clergyman ashamed of his garb and his title; dressing like a layman and dropping the reverend; criticising the Bible as he would any ordinary historical work, and dismissing many of what have been considered the great truths of Christianity as unworthy of acceptance by any rational mind. Whilst in another parish we see its vicar acting more like an Italian than an Englishman, and doing his utmost to put down the Protestantism of the Church which he has solemnly sworn to support, and to erect in its place the faith of the Papacy. I decline to split hairs. I know that our Ritualists maintain they are not Papists; but when I see them inculcating the teaching of Rome, issuing little books of devotion coolly plagiarised from those of Rome, and imitating in their ceremonies, their attire, and their institutions the practices of Rome, it seems to me perfectly justifiable to say that they are Italian, and not English, Churchmen.

And it is from the Ritualists that we have the most to fear. The Broad Churchman appeals to the few whose intellect is stronger than their faith; but the Ritualist appeals to that immense class, idle, weak, emotional, in whom the superstitious element is stronger than the intellectual. No one who has watched, even most superficially, the currents of society but

must have perceived how they set, especially among the higher, or, to speak more correctly, the wealthier classes, towards Ritualism. We are living under a plutocracy, and Ritualism is essentially the religion for the rich. In Ritualism plutocracy sees itself reflected : it is the caricature of an ancient faith, as the plutocrat is himself

the caricature of the aristocrat ; it is gay and gaudy, and fond of pomp and show like the plutocrat ; it is arrogant and self-asserting, its priests concealing their want of birth and scholarship by the robes of sacerdotal pretensions, as the plutocrat himself attempts to hide his deficiencies by the display of his wealth and money power ;

it is shallow, unscrupulous, and miserably effeminate. Yet no sensible man can attempt to deny that Ritualism is now an immense force in the country, and one that is daily extending its power.

A society that is rich, that is idle, that has little to occupy its leisure, must betake itself to some form of distraction. Men have their professions and their ambition to engage their minds ; but it is upon

the women that idleness falls as a rule with so heavy a hand. Balls, dinners, and intrigue that is politely called flirtation will occupy the leisure of many ; still there are others to whom social dissipation is a routine of boredom, and who seek after a more refined excitement. If they have a taste for art, science, or literature, they are fortunate ; but these are the exceptions, not the rule. And now it is that

that strange creation of the nineteenth century, the Anglican priest, steps in and opens out a path for work and action. The young woman whose matrimonial chances are not yet decided, the disappointed middle-aged woman, the elderly dame with no domestic cares, all find their allotted labour—a round of ceremonial observances and duties occupy all their leisure. The nineteenth-century dame, be she spinster, childless wife, or widow, need have no cause to moan over the leaden wings of Time. The Ritualist comes to her aid, and *ennui* and inactivity are no more. What with attending early celebrations, matins, confession, vespers, and midnight services; attaching herself to a sisterhood; visiting a certain class of sick and poor under strict clerical supervision; interesting herself in church decorations, pestering her friends for endless contributions, and distributing little works of devotion of an un-English character, the day is, in fact, too short for her—so short, indeed, that she is often unable to assist her mother in the concerns of her household, or to add by her presence to the geniality of the domestic circle.

We are so wealthy that we wish our religion, like our houses and other appointments, to be in keeping. The robes of our clergy must be splendid; and our clergy, who are now for the most part literates instead of graduates, have no objection that the cope should hide the want of the university hood; our churches must be ornate and artistic; we must have music, flowers, banners, elaborate altar-cloths, and everything that fascinates the eye and inspires the senses. The old-fashioned faith of our fathers has gone to its rest, and save in some obscure village, where people go to worship and

not to perform, is hard to be met with. Sentimental pietism is now religion; an adherence to a host of silly ceremonial observances stands in the place of duty; and faith is now only another word for a belief in the 'priest.' It is idle to talk to Englishmen of the devotion of the Anglican priest, the purity of the Anglican nun, and the zeal of the Anglican monk now working within our midst. Innovators are always zealous and devoted till their system is established. But we have had the system before; and we know, three hundred years ago, what the priesthood, the nunnery, and the monastic order resulted in. History is apt to repeat itself; we have no wish to see those scenes repeated.

There is one dear friend of mine who cordially sympathises with these views, whom it is always a great pleasure to see at the Caravanserai. Hubert Marborough is a type of the old English clergyman which is, unhappily for us, fast dying out. A man of unfeigned piety, an active yet not fussily inquisitive rector, a good classic, and a most perfect gentleman in all his tastes and feelings, he is the last of that class which Sydney Smith called the 'squarsons.' A second son, he was destined for holy orders, and was duly installed in the family living of Hettiscombe. Ten years after having taken his ordination vows, his elder brother was drowned with his only son whilst yachting in the Mediterranean, and Hubert suddenly found himself transformed from a country parson, with a living of eight hundred a year, into a squire with a rent-roll of some annual twelve thousand. Many men under these circumstances would have quitted the Church, and have forgotten the priest in the country gentleman.

Not so Hubert Marborough. He exchanged the rectory for the old hall, letting his curates dwell in the house that he had deserted ; but he still worked his parish, visited his poor, and preached his sermons as became a man who had put his hand to the plough and declined to look back.

The only difference that fortune

made in him was to extend immensely his powers for doing good. He pays his curates well, neither patronising them nor despising them, but treating them like gentlemen, though he is very particular as to their belonging either to the one or the other of our two Universities, and to their style of reading. He can forgive a young

clergyman a good many things, but he will *not* forgive him for dropping his *h*'s or making a false quantity. He has established a dispensary and a good useful library, in which humorous works are not excluded, in the village. He sees that every cottage on his estate is put into repair, and made not only habitable but comfortable. One of the sternest of magistrates on the bench to the

tramp and the vagrant, his hand is ever ready to alleviate misery and suffering. Nor does he perform his acts of charity by deputy, for none knows better than he how a kind word and a friendly greeting enhance a gift from the rich to the poor. It is his hand that often tucks the warm clean blankets around the bed of the rheumatic peasant, or administers the nourishing soup or the dry

old port to the weak and the sickly. It is his smile and chat that are almost as welcome to the honest man temporarily out of work, as is the little present of ready money. The poor dame, who has just become a mother, knows well enough to whom to apply, if she is ordered by the village doctor what it is impossible for her husband to supply her with. Though an opulent squire, the chairman of quarter sessions, and allied by marriage to a powerful earl in his county, none of the poor stand in awe of him. If they want advice or assistance they scruple less to go to him than to one of the curates. Yet, gentle and loving as is their pastor, they know better than to try to use any of the wiles of the suppliant. In spite of his large heart and intense amiability, Hubert Marborough has a keen eye for character, and can be as repellent as the harshest if he suspect imposition. He is the tenderest of shepherds to his flock, but he is quite up to all the gambols of the black sheep.

Of all the broad counties in England I know no fairer than that of—let me call it—Quartzshire. For the combination of mountain and moor, wood and water, it stands unrivalled. To the artist with his æsthetic eye, its hilly passes, richly-clothed valleys, thickly-timbered forests, and picturesque varieties which the landscape is ever unfolding, are as full of charm as are the well-stocked trout-streams and the wild moorland, broken by hill and dale, to the sportsman. In one of its most lovely spots, watered by the broad current of—let me say—the Mica, and within gunshot of the splendid Knole Wood, stands Hettiscombe, a large white building with columns and porticoes, on the brow of one of the

numerous undulations that surround the neighbourhood. A fine park, severed in twain by a lake fed by the river Mica, encircles the house, whilst in the rear is the wood, with its tall waving firs and mysteries of shade. Away in the distance the great upland region of Sleignmoor can be seen, with all its variety of hill and valley, bog and stream; whilst, like Cyclopean castles, the gigantic masses of weathered granite rise at intervals to crown the famous Tors.

Approaching the house, one sees from the balconied terraces and well-kept lawn and gardens that the place is carefully looked after; yet it is not merely as a country seat that Hettiscombe is dear to me. No doubt, amid the stately mansions of this old England of ours, there is many a castle and hall which, so far as architecture, luxury, and appointments are concerned, is the superior of Hettiscombe; but where shall I find such a *home*? Running down from London, with its cynical tone, its artificial pleasures, and its wearying round of excitement, to Quartzshire, no sooner have you passed a couple of days with the family of Hubert Marborough than you look upon life very differently from what you have been accustomed to do in Pall Mall. Perhaps, for the first time, it strikes you that there is something higher than mere pleasure, something nobler than selfishness, something truer and more comforting than mundane philosophy. The manner in which a man brings up his family has always been to me the best test of his character and of the strength of his principles, and I know no more charming sight than the home-life of Hettiscombe. The daughters are simple, well-bred, and unaffected; the sons are free from the

slang of the barrack and the stable; whilst between parents and children, and husband and wife, there is that exquisite harmony of feeling caused by affection, self-respect, and a clear conscience.

A spirit of the most fascinating cheerfulness pervades the whole establishment, and even finds itself reflected amongst the stable-

helps, a notoriously discontented class. The old vicar talks to his wife as if the honeymoon had never dissolved itself into the silver wedding, and the sisters only wrangle amongst themselves in trying to spoil their brothers when on leave from their regiments, or at home during 'the Long.' Though the house is seldom

free from visitors, yet there is no need for the presence of the stranger to give a fillip to the often monotonous round of domesticity. The vicar is quite happy among his books and papers, thinning his trees, cantering about the moorland on his old white hunter, or making a round of calls in the parish. Lady Mary, it seems to me, is never so content as when, in big

hat and gauntlet gloves, she is pottering about the garden, whilst her husband, in the roomiest of Indian chairs, is seated within call, studying the advertisements in the *Field*, or reading the clerical speeches in the *Guardian*. The girls amuse themselves in a thousand ways with a sense of consideration for each other's tastes and wishes not always to be observed amongst sisters; whilst the

brothers seem so proud of the successes of each other—Hal has got the good-conduct sword at Woolwich, Dick has won the cup as best shot at Hythe, Reggie has been complimented by the judge for the way in which he conducted his case—as utterly to preclude all feelings of secret jealousy. When the visitor arrives he is made not only welcome, but feels, no matter how shy by nature, completely at home. Without any fuss or obtrusive activity, he finds the whole family consulting his wishes, laying before him proposals exactly in accordance with his tastes, leaving him alone when he desires, or giving him plenty of society when solitude is unacceptable.

And one of the charms of Hettiscombe is, that you never meet disagreeable people. However cantankerous a man's or woman's nature is, I do not believe he or she could be long in that irritable state under the influence of the cheery piety of the rector, and of the sunny presence of his household. The most suspicious cannot but feel, however much they may differ from him, that Hubert Marborough is a good and single-minded man. Listen to his conversation, watch him as narrowly as you please in all the relations of life, hear him pray and preach, observe the example he sets his family, and you cannot come to any other conclusion but that you are in the society of one who, without a doubt or reservation, believes in the doctrine he professes, and essays to carry out all that it teaches. A Low Churchman of the old school, he is as devoid of the intolerance and acidity of certain of his brethren as he is of the mummery and sickly sentimentalities of the Ritualist. He is an Englishman, with the healthy tastes and aspirations of an Englishman. Old as he is,

there are few men in his part of the county, did he think hunting a sport that became his profession, who are better riders to hounds; and in spite of his waning sight I would sooner back the rector's breechloader to bring down more birds, either in the coverts or on the moors, than that of many a younger man who fancies himself.

He can get on with most people, and long as I have known him never have I heard him utter a spiteful remark or give heed to scandal. Frivolous and malicious gossip he abominates, and its entire absence from the conversation of the household of Hettiscombe is one of the peculiarities of that charming home. Never do you hear any of the slander about the lord-lieutenant, about the bishop, about the neighbouring clergy and gentry and their wives, which forms so large a part of the conversation of the country. The rector's maxim is, if you can say no good of a man, at least say no evil. But there is one class of people he cannot agree with. He sternly refuses to countenance the Ritualists. He can understand, and to a certain extent sympathise with, a man who is a Roman Catholic or a Dissenter or a Jew or even a Free-thinker, but he can neither understand nor associate with one whom he regards as a traitor to the Church of England. To his keen sense of honour it seems inconceivable that a man should continue to draw his stipend from the Church whose teaching he declines to accept and whose discipline he seeks to subvert. It is open to any one who differs from the creed of the Church of England to go outside her pale; but, in his opinion, it is mean and dishonest in the extreme to receive the pay of the Church and to wear her uniform whilst working for the enemy. In

vain the Ritualists around Hettiscombe have sought to convert Hubert Marborough to their way of thinking. His church is sound, solid, air-tight, water-tight, warm, and comfortable; he will not have it 'restored.' Vestments have no charms for him; when he reads prayers he wears his surplice and university hood, and when he preaches he appears in the pulpit in a black gown. He does not believe in incessant church services and in constant celebrations of the Holy Communion; it fatigues the clergy and makes worship mechanical. But he believes in helping the sick and needy, in visiting the widow in her affliction, and in succouring the distressed. When spoken to of the advantages of the system of confession, he mildly replies that he 'has travelled in Italy, France, and Spain, and he has yet to learn that the morality in those countries is superior to that in England.'

During the month of May, when the meetings at Exeter Hall and St. James's Hall are held, my host of Hettiscombe always turns up at the Caravanserai. His figure is quite one of the curiosities of the club. There is no mistaking that tall slender form, now somewhat bowed with age, that high broad-brimmed hat with the healthy smiling face beneath, that frill jutting out of the black sporting-looking waistcoat, till it loses itself within the folds of the capacious white neckcloth; no mistaking that loose untidy-looking black coat, with the side-pockets wide open, suggestive of samples; those wonderful trousers, tight below the knee, yet voluminous enough in all conscience above; those rough cloth gaiters; those thick serviceable shoes! Thus attired, the rector-squire looks the very opposite of many of his clerical brethren, with their smug

suits of shiny black and their atrocious head-gear—a hideous compromise between a billycock and the hat of a cardinal.

There are many married elderly men to whom a run up to London and a fortnight at the club are the most delightful of changes. Not so with Hubert Marborough. As he wanders about the rooms of the Caravanserai, taking up one newspaper after the other, fidgeting about from chair to chair, you can see at a glance that he is not at home. At breakfast the little table, with its bachelor equipments, is a poor substitute for the long broad board at Hettiscombe, with its snow-white cloth and graceful medley of fruit and flowers amid the toast and scones and rolls and the old-fashioned silver dishes. He misses, like most men blessed with many children, the talk and society of the family circle; and he says his tea never tastes the same unless poured out by his eldest daughter. When he surveys the daily bill of fare, swinging on its frame, he looks at it helplessly, undecidedly, and is grateful to the butler when he suggests what should be ordered for dinner. He agrees with the Apostle, that a little wine for the stomach's sake is a good thing; and he also agrees with the Apostle that it should be *wine*, and not logwood-juice, or some other vile decoction calculated to give the drinker acute heartburn within twenty minutes. At Hettiscombe he knows he can rely upon the contents of his cellar-book; but the club wine-list is a publication with which he is not so familiar; the names of many of the wine-merchants are new to him; several of the clarets are unknown to him; and as he sips his port-wine after dinner (our ports are *not* famous at the Caravanserai) I fancy he sighs after the vintages he is accustomed

to at home. He declines to take a house in town for the season, because he is unwilling to quit his pariah for any length of time ; and as his wife and daughters have no fancy to leave the country when it is most beautiful for the dust and heat of London, the rector generally spends his month *en garçon*. Occasionally his family

come up ; but after three weeks at Thomas's Hotel they pine for the shade and breezes of their west-country home, and take their departure.

As the club scarcely suits the domestic instincts of my friend, it is very fortunate that he has seldom occasion to find himself within its walls. As a representative

Low Churchman, and one of the pillars of the National, Hubert Marborough is the welcome guest of the London evangelical world. He dines out at sedate mansions, where the festivities of the evening conclude with an exposition of Scripture and family prayers. At evangelical Drawing-Rooms, assembled to encourage missionary or philanthropic enterprise, he often takes the chair, and offers a

handsome contribution to the institution pleaded for when the velvet bag or white plate makes its begging round. He is always one of the speakers at the anniversaries of the great Low Church societies, and has frequently been asked to preach their annual sermon. He is on the committee of most of the religious institutions of his party, and is the president of one or two little benevolent 'homes' and 're-

fuges,' which he has founded, and which, if the truth were known, are mainly supported by his generosity. Young ladies who write anecdotes of the poor, or little stories with a moral, are always petitioning him to draw up a preface, or to allow them to introduce his name, so as to encourage the sale of their literary undertakings. For the rector-squire of Hettiscombe, apart from the sermons and addresses that he has published, is one of the most fertile of the polemical writers of his party. Not a movement is made by the Ritualists but he exposes the danger to be apprehended from their insidious proceedings. No sooner does a freethinking divine indulge in reflections contrary to the spirit and teaching of the Thirty-nine Articles, than the rector of Hettiscombe boldly comes

to the front, and does his best to refute them.

Thus Hubert Marborough, from his social position, his wealth, and his decided views, is looked up to as one of the leaders of his party. His advice is courted by his bishop, and young evangelical vicars and curates decline to form an opinion upon any great clerical question until they know the views of the divine of Hettiscombe. My friend no doubt has his faults, like all of us ; but when I compare his exquisite conscientiousness, his single-minded piety, his high tone of honour, his practice to the very letter of all that he preaches, with the life and morality of the rest of the world around us, he seems one of the very few who really deserve that noblest title on the roll of Honour, that of—a Christian and a gentleman.

WALKING PARTIES.

I SUPPOSE that at this time of day it is hardly necessary to discuss the abstract advantages of walking. Of course I do not mean the lunacy of a thousand miles in a thousand hours, but honest, wholesome, rational walking. It is the contemplative man's recreation even more than fishing itself. It is the most lasting and the healthiest and cheapest of all recreations. You may walk down gout and a multitude of ills that flesh is heir to. Some people follow the silly rule that you should never walk if you can ride. The true principle is that you should never ride if you can walk. I expect that in the long-run the pedestrians beat the equestrians and the carriage people out and out. I am sure that this is the case so far as regards scenery and science. The pedestrians can climb and descend cliffs, pass over stiles, wander in woods, find his way to choice nooks where the equestrian cannot follow, and where the carriage is altogether out of the question. You follow the path over the rocks which is only accessible on Shanks's mare. Then again you have all the advantages of leisure. Your stay is little or long, just as you choose, and you are unfettered by the time-table, that drawback to our boasted civilisation. Many people who are solitary in their walks at one time of life become gregarious afterwards. I very much admire the way in which Professor Tyndal and various members of the Alpine Club have taken solitary walks up Mont Blanc or Monte Rosa. There was a time when I

delighted in solitary walks, was a true disciple of Zimmermann, and endeavoured to realise the fine old saying that a man should never be less alone than when alone. But when once a man has made the deplorable discovery of what nervousness means, there is an end to the intense pleasure of the lonely walk, and he prefers to take his pedestrian excursions in company. A passage in Charles Kingsley's writings quite spoilt my pleasure in mountain excursions. If you happened, he argues, when speaking of some mount or fell, to fall or break your legs, here you might lie until you were covered by the snows, or had your eyes plucked out by the birds. I know from my own experience that going over the Westmoreland mountains in the dark, even in the company of a most trusty friend, and when your nerves and your wind are not so good as they once were, becomes a trying experience to the amateur mountaineer. Indeed it is absolutely necessary in some kind of mountain travel that there should be a certain number in order to minimise danger and equably distribute their strength. In a party of this kind it is necessary jealously to scrutinise the capabilities of each member. The deplorable catastrophe on the Matterhorn seems to have been caused by one gentleman entirely over-estimating his strength and capabilities. In hazardous country you had better do your walking in company, and in any country a walking party has many peculiar claims to be voted a good thing.

Of course the *personnel* of such a party must be carefully considered. The parties may be as small as two or may extend to any number. These, however, are extreme instances. We will therefore deal with our extreme instances before proceeding with the level averages. I was lately talking with a lady, the wife of a very distinguished man, who told me that she and her husband took long walking tours. They took no other luggage than what they could carry in their pockets for days together, sending on their traps to some central point, from which they diverged in their excursions. Though they had been married for years, they still had so much love for Nature and for each other as to make them look forward to these holidays as the great charm of the Long Vacation. I have met enterprising young couples with alpenstocks and travelling-bags beginning married life as a walking party. Within the last twelve-month a lady has written a book to tell how she and her husband have gone round the world, and another to describe all the drives they have taken. The most simple and natural way of going out walking 'two by two,' the common case of a great multitude taking a walk together, is more and more coming into prominence. We know several archæological and natural-history societies where the pedestrian party is the great principle of the institution. In the summer there is a field-day once every week. The country is carefully mapped out, all the points of interest within walking distance are noted; the list is gradually cleared off, and when cleared off recommenced from the beginning. The members of these walking clubs become veritable Uhlans from their knowledge of

geography and their skill in pedestrian strategy. Of course the members of such societies have their grand days occasionally, when they invite ladies, and give them champagne luncheons. But when they take their walks into distant villages, the wholesome general rule is not to go beyond the limits of bread-and-cheese and beer. At the universities the practical professors, such as those of geology or botany, often lead their pupils as a body into the country, and give lectures on rocks and plants, to the great astonishment of the bucolic mind that does not comprehend the reason of things. At the meetings of our great societies walking parties have come very much to the front in recent years.

A great deal of character is often brought out in a walking tour. A young lady once told me that, considering the awfulness of the long matrimonial voyage, she thought that a short trial trip should be permitted. I do not know what her mamma would think of such a proposition, but the trial trip of a walking excursion often gives one a remarkable insight into character. If the expedition be of a very prolonged kind, it may break down, as in the case of Burton and Speke in Equatorial Africa. Here is an apt illustration.

Lord Shaftesbury, in his *Miscellaneous Reflections*, has the following amusing story: Three or four merry gentlemen came to a country where they were told they should find the worst entertainment and roads imaginable. One said, 'The best expedient for them in this extremity would be to keep themselves in high humour, and endeavour to commend everything the place afforded! They commended every tolerable bit of road or ordinary prospect,

and found reasons for the odd taste and look of things presented to 'em at table; they ate and drank heartily, and took up with indifferent fare so well that it was apparent they had wrought upon themselves to believe they were tolerably served. Their servants kept their senses, and said their masters had lost theirs.' Lord Shaftesbury has, as may well be supposed, his own political or philosophical meaning, but, taking the story as it stands, it really gives us very good advice. It inculcates the great duty of cheerfulness, of making the very best of things: when you have not got what you want, making the very best of things that you have.

I do not wish to contest that time-honoured aphorism, that two are company and three are not. But there are great advantages in the odd man. You are enabled to gratify either the solitary instinct or the social instinct, as may happen. There is great art in mixing your party properly. One man ought to be well read in the archæology or natural science of a district. Another ought to have the mind of a poet or the eye of an artist for scenery. Another ought to be a good practical man, skilled in ordering dinners and rooms, and in slanging fellows who fall out of rank.

It is to be borne in mind that if the walking party is large, the commissariat will require some attention. If you diverge out of the beaten path—and this ought always to be an object—you come upon country hospices, which are quite unprepared for the incursion of tourists. The sensible tourist will be quite satisfied with bread-and-cheese and beer; but in remote country districts, *crede experto*, bad beer, bad cheese, and even bad bread are sometimes only to be found, and then only

enough for one. The practical man of the party must look after these details, and be visited with a vote of no confidence if he does not look after them well. On the beaten routes you are always safe for plenty of 'prog.' It is an error, however, to order a dinner by telegraph. The hotel-keeper will think you grand people, and will prepare you a grand dinner, and you will have to pay grandly in consequence. Though you may make pretty safe about the board, you are not equally safe for the lodging. The whole pedestrian party may have to turn into a stable-loft. They may have to lie on straw and be covered with ferns. There will be no toilet requisites for the dandy. But young men are speedily equipped. A plunge in the stream or in the lasher will set them pretty well right. Mr. Pickwick ordered wine for the good of the landlord, and drank brandy-and-water for his own. In these days, however, it is a discarded superstition that you are obliged to call for anything which you do not really want. It is in the evenings when you have had an honest day's trudge and a cheerful meal that the great charm of the walking party becomes apparent. Some weak-minded weak-legged individual—weak legs and weak minds often go together—may fall asleep, but the full tide of talk sets in among good fellows. The great difficulty is to get to bed. Thence will arise the corresponding difficulty of getting up. But those are delightful hours in which we live over again the scenes of the day, and perhaps go back to other days and other scenes. The flood of anecdotic reminiscence after a regular day's talk is very interesting. If you happen to be staying in a country town, it is not at all

a bad plan to go into the bar or smoking-room of the hotel. You will find that all the leading characters of the place drop in, and you may soon gather up the moral topography.

I remember a man telling a curious story of an adventure that befell him and a friend on a walking tour. They were travelling in a lonely part of a seaside country. It so happened that they had looked up an old map, when they found the words: 'Here liveth Squire Brown, and exerciseth hospitality.' It came into their heads that if Squire Brown still was extant they would give him an opportunity of exercising his somewhat primitive and barbaric virtue. They accordingly called one morning, map in hand, and found a very courteous, ruddy-faced old gentleman, who greeted them very hospitably, and said that he should be most delighted to be privileged to offer them hospitality. He himself was just going off to a coursing match, but he would order dinner and beds for them, and hoped that in every respect they would consider themselves at home. An offer so good was not to be refused, especially as Squire Brown's hall was in the midst of very fine and somewhat inaccessible scenery. They spent a very pleasant day, and enjoyed themselves very much, but their host did not turn up, and kept the whole household waiting for him. About three in the morning he came home, with a fine jovial expression, but very decidedly the worse for liquor. I am sorry not to conclude this little anecdote happily, but strong waters are not in accordance with the improved genius of the age, and his guests left him early next morning.

In these walking tours one often picks up interesting stories about

the neighbourhood. Our practical man enacts the part of Andrew Fairservice in pointing out the different places and telling their private history. That house shrouded in woods—there is something weird and wild about them—has a very sorrowful story. The young lady of the house was to elope from it. But the ladder (whether of rope, silk, or wood, I know not) broke, and the poor girl—it was a terrible anti-climax—fractured one of her limbs, and died of the injury. There is a much pleasanter story about another big house in the same neighbourhood. The estate was to be sold by an erratic old gentleman who had spent all his money. He opportunely owned a lovely daughter. There came a young gentleman, gallant and gay, to inspect the house and lands, and of course he married the young lady. So the dreaded sale never took place, and the lands remained in the ancient line. Here, again, is a big house which is widely known to all the beggars round. I have sometimes fancied that I have myself detected a peculiar mark on the gateway, a kind of private signal to the begging confraternity, that they are sure to get something for the asking. There is a very queer story told about that house.

There lived in this house a pleasant fine-hearted gentleman, who had read political economy, and had made up his mind that he would never give anything to a beggar. He agreed with Archbishop Whately, who used to say that though he had done many things which he ought not to have done, and had left undone many things which he ought to have done, he could truly say that he had never given a sixpence to a beggar. To have made the good Archbishop's apothegm perfect

—he himself was one of the largest givers—he ought to have added, ‘without inquiry.’ I can testify from my own experience that beggars very occasionally tell true stories and deserve to be relieved. This gentleman was sitting outside his house one summer evening in an easy-chair, smoking his cigar and partaking of some agreeable iced fluid. ‘To him,’ as they say in the plays, came up the British tramp, a rascal who has always some relieving points in a love of Nature and ingenious lying. He is closely akin to the regular, or rather very irregular, gipsy, who makes professional depredation on stray poultry, and, indeed, does not draw a particularly fine line in whatever he does. In going about the country you will often fall in with tramp or gipsy, and despite Matthew Arnold’s lovely poem of the ‘Scholar Gipsy,’ and Professor Wilson’s personal experiences among them, and also that eminent legal gentleman who married one of the lot and had great reason to repent, I am, nevertheless, deliberately of the opinion that a little of the society of tramp or gipsy goes a long way. The cigar-smoking gentleman, of whom I was speaking, was a kind-hearted man; but he did not love tramps, and he did not believe in relieving beggars. The tramp told him that he was ill and starving; but it was impossible to tell through the fellow’s swarthy complexion whether he was either the one or the other. He refused to give the fellow anything; and only repeated his refusal still more peremptorily when the man persisted in his begging.

‘But you’ll give me a penny, your honour?’

‘Not a single farthing.’

‘Perhaps you’ll give me some bread?’

‘And you’ll fling it away before you turn the next corner. I know you fellows, and I have known that done before now. I won’t give you anything!’

‘Then I’ll just lie down and die.’

‘All right. Do so, by all means. You are quite welcome.’

The squire finished his cigar, and turned in, leaving the man lying on the grass before his house. It is not every squire who would have allowed a tramp to do so much.

But when the squire looked out of his window in the morning, there was the stark, rigid, dead body of the tramp lying at his gates.

He was not to be blamed. He was not unkind, as I have said; and no human being could have suggested that the wretched tramp had told an awful truth.

To the squire the occurrence was a most severe shock. He made a vow that never again would he ever turn his back on any poor man. Any tramp, however transparent an impostor he might be, was never allowed to go away without at least a penny or a crust. So the house was marked and known by tramps as a place where at least something might be got, and it was accordingly honoured by a great variety of callers in that path of life.

On a home walking tour we came in sight of a beautiful house in a fair park.

‘That belongs to Lady Garnham, Lottie Verschoyle that was.’

‘But who’s her husband? I don’t remember any man of the name of Garnham.’

‘No; she is a baroness in her own right. There is rather a pretty story about her and her title.’

‘What is that?’

‘There is no harm in telling it, as nearly everybody knows it.

Lottie Verschoyle was—it is now ever so many years ago—one of the most daring and handsome young women in the country; a splendid horsewoman. She also had a large fortune. This large fortune of hers did her no good, and, as so often happens, had made an old maid of her. She was always haunted by the suspicion, as all heiresses are, that the wooer is making up to the fortune and not to the lady. In those days a royal prince was always hovering about her. He declared he would marry her, whether the monarch would permit him or not.

‘But what about the Royal Marriage Act?’

‘I believe you will find that the Royal Marriage Act does not prevent a marriage, but requires that a twelvemonth’s notice should be given to Parliament of the intention. The royal duke was really very anxious to marry Lottie, and as there was very little chance of his ever coming to the throne it was not likely that any difficulty would ever be raised. His royal highness was perfectly infatuated about Lottie. But he was a man very much out-at-elbows. Both his character and his fortune were in a dilapidated condition. In vain he swore to pretty Lottie that he loved her for herself alone. Lottie did not believe a word of it. She was worth two hundred thousand pounds, and believed that was all that H.R.H. cared for. At last the Prince made her a regular offer in due form, and pressed it with the uttermost eagerness. Then the lady gave him a most direct and unhesitating rejection, and she dropped some expression which gave him to understand that she did not believe in the reality of the attachment which he professed.

‘Years passed by, and, almost quite unexpectedly, H.R.H. became king. He was happily married. He had outgrown the scandals of his earlier days. The gay Lottie had grown a middle-aged woman, and had never been able to relieve herself of the incurable suspicion that men only liked her for her money. One day the king wrote to her and desired her to fix an interview. It was a strange interview. She had outlived her charms and audacity of speech, and he was now a monarch as wealthy as he was mighty. The king told her that a painful impression had always dwelt upon his mind relating to their old days, and that now, looking back calmly on the past, he wished to tell her on his honour that he had acted from no mercenary motives, but had truly loved her for herself alone. The lady was greatly affected. She must have been more than human not to have been moved by the thought that she might have been Queen of England. Then the king said that as a memorial of old days he wished to make her a peeress in her own right, which was done. Then they parted, and met no more. She died an old maid. Indeed, it was not likely that, having been within an ace of being queen, she would ever care for a marriage at a time of life when a mercenary motive would be suspected more than ever.’

My little essay has been so far like the sermons of Bishop Latimer, who used to interrupt his disquisitions by saying, ‘I’ll tell you a story.’ I now revert to the didactic. A few points of practical detail may be noted. A party of four or six, in the hands of a practical man, ought to be able to effect some savings. If you are not too proud, you may on

various occasions be able to strike a bargain. If you come to an uninteresting country you had better drive, and the expense, when distributed, becomes moderate. In my own pedestrian expeditions, whenever we have come to the head of a lake or the side of a navigable river, the rule has always been to take a boat and row down it, often for many miles at a time, an agreeable change. It is very pleasant to have ladies in the party; but, while anxious to avoid anything that may sound at all ungallant, the blunt truth is always best. The character of the walking tour is essentially altered if we are favoured with those lovely encumbrances. They will cause an additional outlay of both time and money. Of course they will indignantly repudiate the idea. They can go wherever men can go, and their expenses will be much less than the expenses in which men indulge themselves. But practically men are much too gallant to permit this. There must be a pony-carriage to take the light luggage or any lovely traveller when fatigued, and we must order a better dinner with a little champagne for the sake of the ladies. The presence of ladies is a great improvement, but it entirely changes the character of the excursion. That notion of a basket carriage is not at all a bad one, even for pedestrian tourists, to carry one's effects and give an occasional lift. This, however, interferes with the exact idea of a walking tour. Only it must be borne in mind that our walkers have, perhaps, separate tastes which claim indulgence. One man may have a great idea of qualifying himself as scientific; he may be making observations and taking sketch-maps. Another is an etcher. A third is a poet.

So there may be a good deal of lagging on the road, and an occasional off-day. This must be made up for by an occasional forced march if the programme is to be carried out and the skeleton tour accomplished.

If it is necessary to plan your companionship well, it is equally well, it is equally desirable, to have the general object, details, and route carefully mapped out. All pedestrians may be divided into two classes—those who walk for walking sake, and those who walk for an object. I know people who say that they cannot walk unless they have something to go for and somewhere to go to. Now I believe, to use Aristotelian language, that walking is an end-in-itself. I think, however, that other ends may be combined with this general end. I am a great friend to what are called tours of observation. For instance, Mr. Evans walked through Bosnia and Herzegovina, and gave us a most useful book at a critical time; and Major Champion walked through Spain from sea to sea, and became most familiar with the people in their ways and homes. There have been times in our own country when a walk through mining and agricultural districts may possess a political interest and importance. For those who know our plants and flowers, or have an interest in archæology, nearly every mile of English ground has its interest. Still, selecting the best ground we can get, speaking from one's own predilections, I would especially recommend Wales and the Highlands, the Lake districts, and our western peninsula of Devonshire and Cornwall. Going farther, who would not desire the walking tour through continental forests or by Norwegian fiords, or amid Alps, Apennines, or Pyrenees?

Here we get the combination of fine scenery, bracing air, and pleasant companionship. In my own point of view, the human interest ought to transcend every other. The finest minds have felt that there is no greater joy on earth than 'exquisite companionship.' Old Johnson liked the man 'who could put his mind fairly to yours.' In the free, unrestrained, leisurely converse of

the march and of the bivouac, you taste this social happiness to the full. The walking party becomes a talking party. You know your friends better; and what is also of importance, you come to know yourself better. The walking party is certainly the cheapest, and, if properly managed, may be the healthiest and most enjoyable of summer holiday excursions.

THE SONG OF THE SWING.

*Our swing hangs 'neath the willow-tree,
And we two merry maidens be.*

CELIA.

Swing high, swing low !
O, while we go,
Mine be the soul that first shall sing,
And thine the spirit answering.

ANTHEA.

Swing low, swing high !
We mount, we fly !
The first sweet singer shalt thou be,
And I with song will answer thee.

CELIA.

My soul is as the winds that sweep
From shore to shore across the deep ;—

ANTHEA.

And mine seems as a bird to flit
From tree to tree inviting it.

CELIA.

O, mine is as the strain that soars
As high, as high
As words can fly,
Then downward all its rapture pours.

ANTHEA.

And mine seems as a voice to roam ;
From steep to steep
It loves to leap,
Till Echo backward brings it home.

The Song of the Swing.

CELIA.

With ebb and flow the ceaseless tide
Creeps in and out, and far and wide;—

ANTHEA.

With ebb and flow 'tis ours to ride
Upon a light love's fickle tide.

CELIA.

Swing high, swing low !
Yet say not so ;
For Silvio surely loves me well,
And what sad tale hast thou to tell ?

ANTHEA.

Swing low, swing high !
Nor weep, nor sigh ;
He loves not well who loves not long,
Shall be the burden of my song.

CELIA.

My soul is as some sheltered bay,
Where Silvio's barque shall ever stay ;—

ANTHEA.

And mine seems as a wind to sweep
This pirate Silvio from the deep.

CELIA.

He loves me—

ANTHEA.

True ! He loves me too ;
He loves, he loves, as false men do:

CELIA.

But then, last night he softly said—

ANTHEA.

That he and I should some day wed !

CELIA.

Then, twixt the red rose and the white,
His love shall find no rest to-night.

ANTHEA.

Betwixt the white rose and the red,
Though he may roam he shall not wed.

CELIA AND ANTHEA.

Ah, no, no, no !
For high or low,
He loves not well who loves not long,
Shall be the burden of our song.

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LONDON SOCIETY.

AUGUST 1879.

MY FIRST SPECULATION.

ONE morning, in what year it does not matter, I received the following communication from my friend T.:

‘Dear Mr. S.,—I have something most important to communicate to you. Can you come round to me immediately?—Yours always faithfully,
T.’

T. was a character in his way. He was one of those men whose modesty or shyness stands in their way of advancement in life. Well read, and with a large experience of life from travel and mixing in all kinds of society both in Europe and America, he was passed easily by others of very much less pretensions to merit, and was looked upon rather as a social failure. He was sensitive even to a fault, and it was through some mistaken idea of duty—at least so his friends said—that he had quarrelled with his own family, who were well to do, and lived entirely by his own exertions. He had been all sorts of things and had tried all sorts of things, and was, at the time of which I am writing, a temporary clerk in an office in the City, and which appointment I had been partly the means of getting him. I had not seen him for some little

time, so that his communication somewhat surprised me. I went round to his office, when he asked me to step down-stairs to a dark room underground, where he said we could talk undisturbed. He apologised for giving me the trouble to come round to him; ‘but as I’m not on the regular staff here,’ he said, ‘I could not presume to ask for leave of absence in the middle of the day.’ He then shut the door in a mysterious manner, and produced from his pocket a ms., which he held before me. ‘I’ve got something here to show you,’ he said. I knew that he dabbled a little in literature, and had occasionally published some verses of his own composition; and as I looked at the closely written pages, I began to fear that he had asked me round to give my opinion on some sublime poem. Though I had befriended him slightly on one or two occasions, I did not look for this return of gratitude, and I am afraid I gasped out, ‘I hope I haven’t to read it!’

‘No, I don’t want you to read it.’ I breathed again. ‘But I want to tell you what it is. I want to put you up to a good thing.’

Again visions of a work of

which I was expected to take a dozen copies or so came before me.

'Well, what is it?' I said. 'The magnum opus come out at last?'

'You flatter me,' he said; 'but I'll tell you shortly what it is. You know I was once in the employment of the Great Buffalo Railway Company, and did duty with them both in America and in this country for some time. I told you before how badly they treated me; how, when they got all the information and work they could out of me, they gave me notice to go, on the plea that their establishment must be reduced to lessen the expenses. They turned me off, but retained a junior, because he happened to be a friend of the chairman of the company. I can put up with a good deal, but I can't stand that; you know as well as I do that the affair is a gigantic swindle, and must collapse sooner or later. I know more about them than most people give me credit for, and I have written this pamphlet giving a full history of the company and the present state of their finances. When it comes out, I know it will have a very damaging effect; the shares are certain to run down, and if you sell before the news is made public, I can guarantee you a certain gain. You have always been very kind to me, and I wish to make you some return for it. I am going to have the pamphlet privately printed and circulated. I am backed up by a well-known man in the City, so that I am guaranteed my expenses. It will cost us nothing at all, and give us a certain harvest.'

The idea was a novel and tempting one to me. Visions of a 'potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice,' such as Dr. Johnson saw in the

brewery of Mr. Thrall, floated before my eyes. But I had never had any dealings with the Stock Exchange, and I knew no broker who would operate for me. The tempter before me got over that difficulty by suggesting that he could introduce me to his stockbroker when the time came.

'You needn't be in a hurry,' he said. 'The pamphlet has to be printed first, and then sent round to the City editors of the papers. Then will be the time for us to sell.'

Perhaps divining the doubt that was in my mind, he added, 'You needn't be under any apprehension; it is a dead certainty that the shares will run down as soon as my revelations see the light. In the mean time not a word to anybody.'

So we parted for the present. In about a fortnight's time T. sent me a proof of the pamphlet. It was very ably written, and was certainly very damaging, if everything was true that was stated in it. My spirits revived, and I almost began to share the enthusiasm of my friend, though I couldn't quite get over the feeling that I was assisting at a small Gunpowder Plot which was to blow the Great Buffaloes to atoms. But having no Lord Monteagle among the shareholders, I kept my own counsel. The next day T. called upon me, and said that all the City editors of the papers had received the pamphlet, and would most likely notice it the following day, and that now was the time to give our directions to the brokers. I went round with him to Messrs. Script & Bond, stockbrokers, feeling, however, very much as if I was going to my execution. Both the partners were out, and I felt as if I had been reprieved; but an officious boy in the office volunteered to

go round to the Stock Exchange to fetch one or both of them. Mr. Script presently appeared. He was a bland-looking man, and was evidently well known to T. I found out afterwards that T. was in the habit of doing small speculations with him. I was formally introduced, and my business made known to him. He appeared pleased, and, in a bland manner, said he should be very happy to execute any orders I should like to give him; but, as if noticing my scared look—for now the time had come I began, in common parlance, to ‘funkt’ it—he called his partner Bond, who had just come in, and my friend T. into his private room, and with closed doors they consulted together for some little time. T. then came out, and said that though Script & Bond would be very pleased to operate for me, they would not carry over.

‘Carry over! What on earth do they mean?’ I said.

T. smiled at my simplicity; but as some of my readers may be just as ignorant of the ways of the Stock Exchange as I was then, I will give them the gist of T.’s explanation.

When a person buys or sells shares or stock he either pays or is paid for them at once, or he waits for the account, which is a term used on the Stock Exchange to denote the time (generally about two weeks) in which the transaction must be completed, and all purchases or sales of stock must be ‘made up’ or paid for on or before the settling-day, which is the last day of the account. If a person is only speculating—it will often happen that the price of the shares has not gone up or down according to his expectations—he can sometimes, by paying a small fine, ‘carry over’ his

account till the following settling-day. This operation is attended with some risk to the stockbroker, as should the shares go down instead of up, or *vice versa*, and the operator should prove unable to pay the difference between the buying and the selling prices, the stockbroker would have to pay the difference out of his own pocket. It follows that unless he knows his client to be a man of substance, he will as a rule refuse to transact business of this kind. I was unknown to Messrs. Script & Bond; they therefore naturally refused to ‘carry over’ for me.

To comfort me, T. added to his explanation,

‘I am quite sure that even if they would do it there would be no occasion for it. Long before the 20th, the day for which I propose to sell, the shares will have gone down, and we shall have bought in. You needn’t be afraid; they must to a moral certainty go down.’

I was satisfied, and so were Messrs. Script & Bond. I gave my orders to sell Great Buffaloes, and then it was that I first began to understand how I could sell things that I did not possess, and could buy them back again and still be without any.

The contract note was forwarded to my rooms in the evening, and I spent half the night in intricate calculations of how much I should make if they fell to certain points. I did not sleep much that night, and by the next morning my fears of any evil consequences had totally vanished, and my only regret was that I did not know more brokers who would sell shares for any amount I pleased. I did really go the next day to one man I knew slightly; but fortunately for me he was away from town, and as I was

not known to his partner, I merely said that my business, like that of Mr. Toots, was not of 'the slightest consequence.' The pamphlet was published, and was noticed by several of the newspapers—one paper which especially delighted in abuse of any kind gave it a whole column. Still the effect was imperceptible upon the shares of the Great Buffalo. They remained stationary. On my representing this to T. he immediately explained that the news had not yet had time to get down into the country; that when *the* pamphlet reached the great centres of industry in the middle and north of England, there would naturally be large orders for sales upon London, and we should then see the shares begin to move with a vengeance. Never before in my life had the money article been of any interest to me; but now it was the very first thing I turned to whenever I took up a paper; and, not content with the latest quotations in the 'special' evening papers, I gave my servant strict orders to bring the morning paper directly it arrived to my bedroom, that I might see if the latest quotations were confirmed, before I was out of bed. Two or three days passed, and still the rush downwards did not come. On the contrary the shares went up. T. was ready with his explanations as usual.

'My dear fellow,' he said, 'don't be alarmed. As I told you before, the information must get down into the country, and must thoroughly filter through the minds of holders of stock there. Of course people are suspicious at first of any news, and they wait till it is confirmed by their London correspondents.'

'But why don't the London people act upon this information

you have so kindly given them?' I remarked.

'So they will shortly,' he said. 'But during the last month there has been great speculation in Great Buffaloes, and a fictitious buoyancy is given to the market by the mere fact that people are forced to buy in for the next settlement.'

'What do you mean by that?' I asked innocently.

'A large number of people have *bared* the shares; that is, gone in for a fall; but the market remaining stationary, they have been obliged to buy back to cover themselves. The sudden demand has naturally increased the price of shares and sent them up. But the rise is but temporary; you'll see something as soon as this settlement is over.'

As we had sold for the settlement after the one just concluding I tried to make my mind easy, and to wait the results of the present settlement.

The settling-day came and went, and still the shares of the Great Buffalo did not move. The ever-ready T. was again prepared with his explanations.

'It would perhaps have been better,' he said, 'to have waited until after the last settlement before we did anything, as the prices of the English market depend very much on those of New York, the greater part of the shares being in America. Therefore, whatever may be done here will not greatly affect their steadiness out there, until the cause of it is fully known. I have sent the pamphlet out by the last mail, so that it will reach there before the 20th.'

I really began to have some doubts whether T. was not an impostor, as the shares went up again. On the morning of the 17th, three days before the set-

thing-day, I received the following letter from Messrs. Script & Bond :

‘Capel-court.

‘Dear Sir,—Referring to your esteemed order of the 8th ult., we would remind you that the shares we then sold for you should be delivered here by Wednesday morning. We presume you will have them ready for delivery.—We are, dear sir, your obedient servants,

‘SCRIPT & BOND.’

Having never possessed a single share, of course I had none to deliver, so in a fright I took the letter round to T.

‘That’s only their way,’ he said, ‘of reminding you that you must settle up. They know very well you can’t deliver.’

‘But what’s to be done?’ I said; ‘how am I to settle up? The shares are higher to-day than they have been yet.’

‘They always rally just before “settling-day,”’ he said.

I began to lose patience. ‘They are always doing something, but never the right thing,’ I said.

But T. soothed my ruffled spirit; he put his hand on my shoulder, and said, ‘That the shares will go down I am as positive as I stand here. We may have sold too soon; but what we must do now is to settle this account, and as soon as the settling-day is over sell again for the next account but one.’

So I went round with him to Messrs. Script & Bond’s office, where, instead of receiving, I had to pay the difference caused by having to buy in at the higher value of the shares.

Two or three days after, I went round to see T. again. He was very sanguine. He had heard from America that the pamphlet had been well received.

‘You need have no fear now about selling,’ he said; ‘I expect in a day or two the prices from New York will be very different.’

Emboldened by his manner I volunteered to go and give the orders myself, both on my account and his. Messrs. Script & Bond received me very affably, as they had found, I suppose, that I had paid up all right. I told them my business.

‘Let me see,’ said Script; ‘your last were the preference shares, I think.’

Not liking to appear ignorant I said, ‘Yes, I think they were;’ though I was obliged to confess to myself that I did not know the difference between preference and ordinary. At all events, not knowing what I was about, I gave the order to sell so many preference. The contract note was forwarded to me as usual that evening. I noticed that it was different from the last one, but I did not quite understand what it was.

However, it did not trouble me very much, but I took it round to T. in the morning. When he looked at it his face became horrified.

‘O, I’m ruined, I’m ruined!’ he gasped out. ‘What have you done?’

It was now my turn to be alarmed.

‘It’s all right,’ I said, ‘isn’t it?’

‘All right! no! Do you know what you’ve done? You’ve sold the wrong shares, and instead of twenty, they’ve got down two hundred.’

‘Well, I thought it was two hundred. Script & Bond seemed to think it was all right.’

‘I must go round at once,’ said T., ‘and get them to cancel the order. I shall lose every penny I’ve got if the shares should go up.’

T. went round and got the order cancelled, and we were contented with dealing in a modest way with the ordinary shares, 'to make a small but certain profit,' as T. observed.

That afternoon there came a telegram from America that one of the principal bridges of the Great Buffalo line had been burnt, and that consequently the traffic was quite stopped for the time. It sent down the ordinary shares about 2, but in the course of that week the preference shares fell from 38 to 25; so that had we stuck to our original bargain we should have made a little fortune. T.'s anguish and my disgust may be imagined, and Script & Bond

did not let the opportunity pass to twit me with my want of pluck when I went to settle up with them for the shares I had dealt with. Thinking that the ordinary shares would certainly follow the preference in their downward tendency, I waited too long; they rallied, and when I closed the account by the settling-day I was a loser once more. I had had enough by this time of Great Buffaloes, and I left the office of Script & Bond 'a sadder but a wiser man.' T. avoided me for some time after this. I never heard him mention *the* pamphlet again, and he has never offered to put me up 'to a good thing' since my first speculation.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

XI.

THE SALTS, AND THE DISCOVERY OF ALPACA.

WHEN the adventurous Pizarro advanced upon Peru and overthrew the last of the Incas, he found a rich and fertile country, the inhabitants of which were clothed in woollen garments of great beauty and delicacy. The texture of these garments was wholly different from anything that the Spaniards had ever seen before, and their love of finery prompted them to make careful inquiry into the nature of the material, and the process by which it was manipulated. They found that the beautiful robes and mantles worn by the natives were made from the wool of a species of sheep or camel indigenous to the country. This animal, of which there were four varieties—the Guanaco and the Vicuna, which were wild, and the Llama and the Pacos or Alpaca, which were domesticated—was unlike any fleece-bearing animal of Europe, and had been kept from time immemorial by the Peruvians, its wool being valued for the lustre, transparency, and length of its fibre, and its flesh highly prized as an article of food. In 1534 Pizarro and his followers took with them to Europe, along with their treasures of gold and silver, a number of alpaca fleeces and fabrics woven therefrom; but the Spaniards do not seem to have possessed the ability or industry necessary to take up the manufacture that was thus virtually put into their hands; for it was not until nearly three centuries later that any record is found of the manufacture of al-

paca stuffs being seriously attempted in Europe. As has been shown in so many other instances, the barbarian has been hundreds, nay thousands, of years in advance of his civilised conqueror in the industrial arts.

From the time of Pizarro down to the beginning of the present century, the wool-producing ruminants of South America were permitted to remain comparatively unnoticed except by enterprising zoologists. Stray specimens found their way to European menageries; but no one thought of adapting the long silky fleece of the alpaca to the purposes of manufacture. Various attempts were made to acclimatise this interesting animal in England from time to time, not for any value that was attached to its wool, but as a matter of curiosity. The first alpaca seen in this country was the property of Mr. de Tastet of Halstead, in Essex, who had a specimen of the animal in his possession in 1809. It was afterwards exhibited for many years in the Surrey Zoological Gardens. The Duchess of York subsequently maintained four or five alpaca pets at Oatlands, and later still Viscount Ingestre, the Earl of Derby, Mr. Stevenson of Oban, Mr. Joseph Hegan of Liverpool, and others, tried the experiment of breeding them, but with only small success. It may now be considered as proved that the humidity of the English climate is unfavourable to the healthful existence of these animals.

The manufacture of alpaca

fabrics had not yet spread beyond the confines of South America, and the naturalists who had interested themselves so much in the habits of the docile and attractive ruminant had given little thought to the utilisation of its fleece. But the man had already been born who, without any knowledge of what the ancient Peruvians had accomplished, was to discover and realise the true value of the wool of the alpaca. That man was Titus Salt, who was born in 1803 at Morley, near Leeds, in a quaint two-storied building known as the Old Manor House. His father, Daniel Salt, followed the pursuit of a farmer for some years, and shortly after the birth of Titus removed from Morley to Crofton, near Wakefield, and occupied a farm there. Agriculture, however, did not provide sufficient exercise for his energetic spirit; so after a while he relinquished farming altogether and migrated to Bradford, which was then just beginning to feel the influence of that wave of enterprise and industry which eventually carried it into the haven of manufacturing supremacy. Daniel Salt became a Bradford woolstapler while yet his son Titus was receiving his educational training at the Heath Grammar School, Wakefield, and his business sagacity soon won for him a prominent position in the town.

This was a period of rapid development for the industries of England. Steam-power had begun to assert its influence upon the manufactures of the north, and the age of industrial invention had set in with all its force. Every year saw some new mechanical contrivance or some fresh arrangement of material introduced, and commercial undertakings expanded and prospered to an extent that was wholly un-

paralleled. Daniel Salt saw that there was money to be made by the buying and selling of wool in those days, and he engaged himself so actively therein that, by the time his son Titus became old enough to take upon himself business duties, there was a good opening for the son as partner with the father.

Strange as it may appear to us now, young Salt did not look with favour upon the trade that his father was engaged in; he hankered more after the pastoral delights of a farmer's life, and liked not the smoke and din and bustle of factories and workshops. But, fortunately for himself and the world generally, he was not permitted to indulge his predilections; Daniel Salt saw that there was more to be done by a high-principled, energetic, plodding young man in the commercial pursuits which were so speedily developing in Bradford than in the humdrum quietude of an agricultural career; so he insisted on his son adopting the wool business to begin with, and the firm of Daniel Salt & Son was the result, young Titus becoming a partner in the year 1834.

When once Titus Salt found himself established as a Bradford woolstapler, he gave his whole heart to the advancement of his business, and was soon a familiar figure in the wool marts of the kingdom, and acquired the good opinion of his fellow-traders as a straightforward and able man of business. Success seems to have attended his endeavours from the first; and in a very short time he must have seen that he had entered upon a far more profitable career than he could ever have hoped for, had he been allowed to follow the original bent of his mind and adopt the profession of a farmer.

Not long after the time of his

entering into partnership with his father, he turned his attention to a particular description of wool called Donskoi, a Russian fleece which had until then been solely employed in the woollen manufacture. This Donskoi wool, in which the Salts dealt very considerably, was regarded as altogether unsuitable for the purposes of the worsted manufacture; but young Salt, after testing it in various ways, formed a contrary opinion, and urged the Bradford spinners to make use of it. They declined to listen to his proposals, however; so, with that dogged determination of purpose which has characterised his whole business career, he resolved that, rather than abandon the idea, he would try the experiment on his own account, and he accordingly set up as a worsted spinner and manufacturer in an old mill in Silsbridge-lane.

It may be worth while explaining, at this point, what is the difference between worsteds and woollens. To the uninitiated, worsteds are nearly always called woollens, and Bradford men are frequently annoyed by this error being perpetuated in print, writers for the press seldom being able to appreciate the distinction between one class of goods and the other. Mr. Walter S. B. McLaren has recently defined woollen and worsted yarns as follows: 'A worsted yarn may be defined as a thread spun from wool, in which the fibres are arranged so as to lie smoothly in the direction of the length of the thread and parallel to each other. . . . A woollen yarn, on the other hand, is a thread spun from wool in which the fibres are arranged so as to lie in every direction, and cross and overlap each other, that they may present their serrated surfaces in the greatest variety of directions.'

This crossing and overlapping of the fibres is the characteristic of woollen yarn, while the object of the worsted spinner is to have a smooth and level thread. It may be further explained that manufactured woollens comprise all descriptions of cloth, such as coatings, &c.; while worsteds include various kinds of stuffs which are used for ladies' dresses. There is a much greater combination of raw material in worsteds than in woollens.

It will now be understood how great the difficulty was for young Salt to persuade Bradford spinners that a wool that had hitherto been used exclusively in the manufacture of cloth could be made equally available for the making of worsted goods. Mr. Salt, however, soon showed the Bradford spinners that he was on the right tack; for he manipulated the Donskoi wool with complete success, and produced good marketable worsted stuffs therefrom. Bradford was surprised and delighted, and the reputation of young Salt as a shrewd far-seeing man of business was firmly established. The importation of Donskoi wool for use in the worsted trade began from that time, and increased year by year until it came to form a considerable item of the foreign wool that passed through the hands of the Bradford woolstaplers.

Meanwhile a few persons here and there were attempting to make a marketable commodity of the fleece of the alpaca. On the return of the British troops from the attack on Buenos Ayres in 1807, they brought a few bags of alpaca-wool with them, and it was submitted for inspection in London. Mr. William Walton, who published a work on the alpaca, alludes to this particular wool, and says, 'Owing to the difficulty

of spinning it, or the prejudice of our manufacturers, it did not then come into notice.' The first person in England who succeeded in producing a marketable fabric from this material was Mr. Benjamin Outram, a manufacturer of Greetland, near Halifax; who, after much trouble, produced an article which ladies bought at high prices for carriage shawls and cloakings, but which was valued more as a curiosity of manufacture than as a really attractive material. In the goods that Mr. Outram produced there was little of the lustre and fineness which have distinguished the more recent manufactures of this class; and, after a short time, he relinquished the idea of ever being able thoroughly to utilise the wool of the alpaca. Messrs. Wood & Walker were the next to try their hands upon the South American fleece, and they spun a quantity of it for the Norwich camlet trade; it was also sometimes used instead of English 'hog' wool for certain fine warps. In 1832 some gentlemen interested in South American commerce paid a visit to Mr. James Garnett of Clitheroe, who did business with that part of the world; and in the course of their conversation on trade he suggested that they might possibly find it profitable to try and create a market for the wool of the alpaca in this country, and offered, if they would send him a few pounds of the fibre, to have experiments made with it, so that its value might be thoroughly tested. Some months afterwards Mr. Garnett received a few samples of alpaca-wool from his friends the South American traders, and he forwarded it without delay to Messrs. Horsfall of Bradford, with instructions to make it into 'pieces.' They did as they were desired, and in due time an alpaca

'piece' was produced, resembling a heavy camlet in texture, and was shown to various merchants. Neither the appearance nor the price of the article, however, was such as to command the favourable opinion of the merchants, and Messrs. Horsfall did not continue their experiments.

In that same year Messrs. Hegan, Hall, & Co., wool-importers of Liverpool, had their attention directed to the wool of the alpaca, and they ordered their agents in Peru to forward them certain quantities to Liverpool. Parcel after parcel of wool was then shipped to the Mersey; but not much of it made its way beyond the warehouses of Messrs. Hegan & Co. A few Bradford manufacturers experimented with it so far as to make a few figured 'pieces,' in which alpaca was used for the weft, and worsted for the warp; but their manufacture was soon abandoned, the goods not suiting the public taste. In fact, it appeared pretty conclusive that alpaca was entirely unmarketable, and Messrs. Hegan & Co. began to regret having invested so largely in the Peruvian wool.

In 1836, however, Mr. Titus Salt, during one of his frequent wool-buying expeditions, accidentally fell in with Messrs. Hegan & Co.'s unsaleable stock of alpaca-wool, and from that time there was hope for the long-despised fibre. Charles Dickens many years ago described this fortunate discovery in his happiest vein in the pages of *Household Words*, and it is impossible to resist the temptation of reproducing his account.

'A huge pile,' says Dickens, 'of dirty-looking sacks, filled with some fibrous material which bore a strong resemblance to superannuated horsehair or frowsy elongated wool, or anything else unpleasant and unattractive,

was landed in Liverpool. When these queer-looking bales had first arrived, or by what vessel brought, or for what purpose intended, the very oldest warehouseman in Liverpool docks couldn't say. There had once been a rumour—a mere warehouseman's whisper—that the bales had been shipped from South America on spec, and consigned to the agency of C. W. & F. Foozle & Co. But even this seems to have been forgotten; and it was agreed upon by all hands, that the three hundred and odd sacks of nondescript hair-wool were a perfect nuisance. The rats appeared to be the only parties who at all approved of the importation; and to them it was the very finest investment for capital that had been known in Liverpool since their first ancestors had migrated thither. Well, those bales seemed likely to rot, or fall to the dust, or be bitten up for the particular use of family rats. Brokers wouldn't so much as look at them. Merchants would have nothing to say to them. Dealers couldn't make them out. Manufacturers shook their heads at the bare mention of them; while the agents of C. W. & F. Foozle & Co. looked at the bill of lading, and once spake to their head clerk about shipping them to South America again. One day—we won't care what day it was, or even what week or month it was, though things of far less consequence have been chronicled to the half-minute—one day, a plain business-looking young man, with an intelligent face and quiet reserved manner, was walking along through those same warehouses at Liverpool, when his eyes fell upon some of the superannuated horsehair projecting from one of the ugly dirty bales. Some lady rat, more delicate than her neighbours, had

found it rather coarser than usual, and had persuaded her lord and master to eject the portion from her resting-place. Our friend took it up, looked at it, felt it, smelt it, rubbed it, pulled it about; in fact, he did all but taste it, and he would have done that if it had suited his purpose—for he was "Yorkshire." Having held it up to the light, and held it away from the light, and held it in all sorts of positions, and done all sorts of cruelties to it, as though it had been his most deadly enemy, and he was feeling quite vindictive, he placed a handful or two in his pocket, and walked calmly away, evidently intending to put the stuff to some excruciating private tortures at home. What particular experiments he tried with this fibrous substance I am not exactly in a position to relate, nor does it much signify; but the sequel was, that the same quiet business-looking man was seen to enter the office of C. W. & F. Foozle & Co., and ask for the head of the firm. When he asked that portion of the house if he would accept eightpence per pound for the entire contents of the three hundred and odd frowsy dirty bags of nondescript wool, the authority interrogated felt so confounded that he could not have told if he were the head or tail of the firm. At first he fancied our friend had come for the express purpose of quizzing him, and then that he was an escaped lunatic, and thought seriously of calling for the police; but eventually it ended in his making it over in consideration of the price offered. It was quite an event in the little dark office of C. W. & F. Foozle & Co., which had its supply of light (of a very inferior quality) from the grim old churchyard. All the establish-

ment stole a peep at the buyer of the "South American stuff." The chief clerk had the curiosity to speak to him and hear him reply. The cashier touched his coat-tails. The book-keeper, a thin man in spectacles, examined his hat and gloves. The porter openly grinned at him. When the quiet purchaser had departed, C. W. & F. Foozle & Co. shut themselves up, and gave all their clerks a holiday.'

The 'quiet purchaser' was young Titus Salt, and 'C. W. & F. Foozle & Co.' were Messrs. Hegan, Hall, & Co. That first transaction proved a good day's work for both buyer and sellers. Mr. Salt took the coach back to Bradford; and through the long dark evenings of the next few months the old mill in Silsbridge-lane might be seen lighted up, and mysterious figures flitted to and fro amongst the looms and spindles, and few understood the deep import of all this night-work and secret experimenting. As time wore on, however, it was noised abroad that Titus Salt, the man who had converted Donskoi wool to the purposes of the worsted trade, had made another discovery of even greater importance. It was said that this time he had discovered a new fibre which was to revolutionise the trade. But when it came to be known that the fibre in question was nothing but the oft-tried and much-maligned alpaca which so many spinners and manufacturers had previously failed to work up into a presentable fabric, the enterprising speculator was sneered at considerably. Titus Salt, however, could afford to laugh at the sneers of his neighbours, for the more he experimented with the 'frowsy nondescript hair-wool,' the more beauty he discovered in it; its long staple and bright lustrous

appearance foreshadowed in his mind a new soft and delicate material which should almost vie in attractiveness with silk. The only difficulty was to bring the wool completely under the subjection of his machinery; and he adapted and adapted, altered and invented, until in the end the Peruvian fleece became as amenable to the operations of the machine as the wool of the English sheep. For a long time he lingered on the threshold of success, working and hoping and despairing in turns; while at last he effected the true combination, and the world was made aware that it possessed a new fabric. He was not long in surmounting the difficulties of combing and spinning the alpaca-wool, and forming it into beautiful 'slivers;' it was when he came to the weaving process that he was brought to a stand. He tried alpaca-warp and alpaca-weft to begin with; then warps of woollen and worsted were put into combination; and all these failing to produce a satisfactory result, he bethought him he would try cotton-warps, which were then being rapidly introduced into the general worsted trade. Cotton-warps gave the required result; the problem was solved. He was now able to produce alpaca pieces which would match in lustre and delicacy of texture the primitive garments made centuries before by the people of Peru, and at a price that would insure their being marketable. Now the drapers' shop-windows of all our large towns began to exhibit dress-pieces of the new material, glossy, soft, and elegant, and it speedily sprang into public favour. Orders for the new goods followed each other in quick succession, and Mr. Salt soon found that to keep pace with them he would require to enlarge

his sphere of operations. He removed to larger premises, and his business extended so much that mill after mill was taken by him, until we find him carrying on his new manufacture simultaneously at four separate mills in different parts of Bradford.

During those first few years of the alpaca manufacture, Mr. Salt must have made an enormous profit. Many other manufacturers entered into competition with him, as was to be expected when they saw what could be done with alpaca; but for several years Mr. Salt retained the chief part of the trade in his own hands.

Some idea of the growth and extent of the alpaca manufacture may be gathered from the various statistics which have been published from time to time. From 1836 to 1840 the quantity of alpaca wool imported into this country averaged 560,800 lbs. per annum. By 1852 the quantity imported had increased to 2,186,480 lbs.; in 1872, twenty years later, the importation stood at 3,878,739 lbs. Last year (1878) the quantity imported was 3,875,042 lbs., valued at 335,631*l.*, which was an increase in quantity but a decline in value on 1877. It is worth while noting the advance of price which has been maintained in regard to this commodity since it was taken in hand by young Titus Salt. The price given by the 'quiet purchaser' was 8*d.* per lb.; a year or two afterwards it was 1*s.* per lb.; in 1856 it had advanced to 2*s.* 6*d.*; and has since then sometimes reached as high a price as 3*s.* per lb. But, in spite of this marked increase in the price of the raw material, the manufactured goods can now be purchased more cheaply than at any previous period, a fact which will serve to indicate the very large profit that must have been

made while the alpaca manufacture was in its infancy.

For several years subsequent to what may be termed the discovery of alpaca, Mr. Salt applied himself with untiring industry to his business, and took little part in public affairs. His whole soul was wrapt up in his work, and the success which he achieved has rarely been paralleled in modern times. Of 'fortunes made in business' his has been one of the greatest of our day; and the philanthropic spirit in which he has dispensed his riches has entitled him to be regarded as one of the noblest benefactors of the century.

In 1844 her Majesty the Queen desired Mr. Salt to execute a little order for her. On the Royal farm at Windsor two animals of the alpaca breed were kept, and their fleeces were sent to Mr. Salt to be manufactured into dress-pieces, the Queen having by this time heard and seen a good deal of the new material. The fleeces weighed 16½ lbs., and when sorted and combed, yielded 1 lb. of white and 9 lb. of black wool. From these samples Mr. Salt manufactured an apron of marvellous beauty; a striped figured dress, the warp being of rose-coloured silk and the weft of white alpaca; a plain dress, fifteen yards in length, and containing only two and a half pounds of alpaca; a plaid alpaca dress of novel design; and a woollen alpaca dress. These things so delighted her Majesty that alpaca was constituted an article of the Royal costume, and became a fashionable fabric.

Mr. Salt's position in the commercial world was now assured. He had made a bold stroke, and he had won. Many men would have rested here, and, secure of a handsome fortune, would have

retired from the turmoil and excitement of business. But Mr. Salt was a born worker, and could not think of taking refuge in a life of idleness while yet a comparatively young man. Relaxation of some kind, however, is necessary to us all, and Mr. Salt sought it in public duties, duties which his fellow-townsmen were most anxious for him to assume. His kind and generous disposition, and the sturdy honesty of his character, admirably fitted him for the impartial discharge of those functions which are usually intrusted to a town's principal citizens. Bradford was incorporated in 1847, and prior to that time Mr. Salt served the town in the capacity of Chief Constable. On the charter of incorporation being granted, he was made senior alderman, and was appointed one of the first justices of the peace for the borough. In the following year he was chosen Mayor, and during his term of office enjoyed great popularity. Meanwhile, he had a young family growing up around him, having, as early as 1829, married Caroline, the daughter of Mr. George Whitlam of Grimsby. This lady, who still lives, bore Mr. Salt eleven children. Mr. Salt lived an active life in the decade from 1840 to 1850, apportioning his time between the exciting pursuits of business and the responsibilities of a public career, and beyond this honourable mode of existence it was not imagined that he could expect to go. He had attained what to most men would have been the very summit of ambition, and there seemed to be little left for him to achieve.

But in 1851 Mr. Salt conceived the idea of founding an industrial colony of his own, wherein he could carry out certain long-cherished ideas for the social and

moral improvement of the working classes. He had witnessed the protracted and arduous crusade on behalf of the factory children, which ended in the Ten Hours' Bill; and he had not failed to observe the evil results of close employment day by day in unhealthy workrooms. Thus, keenly alive to the desirability of bringing about a better condition of labour, and of inducing greater harmony between employer and employed, he cast around for a favourable spot upon which to build his colony. His Bradford mills were old and dingy and dilapidated, and it must often have pained him to see that his own workrooms were much more cramped and unwholesome than was good for his *employés*. He determined, therefore, to break away from these unpromising surroundings and start anew under the most favourable circumstances that his thoughtful and considerate mind could suggest. He must either do this, he felt, or retire from business altogether and enjoy his ample fortune in the best way he could. Fortunately, he elected to carry forward his new business project, and in 1851 he pitched upon a picturesque and suitable spot in the romantic valley of the Aire, about three miles from Bradford, and there commenced building a factory on a scale of magnitude which the world had never heard of before. For the next two years the site now occupied by Saltaire presented a busy scene, a large army of workers being engaged in the realisation of Mr. Salt's gigantic conception; and on the 20th of September 1853, Mr. Salt's fiftieth birthday, the immense 'palace of industry' was opened, a grand inaugural banquet being held in the combing-shed, a room which provided sitting accommodation for 3500 guests.

Never was known such an industrial banquet. Amongst the guests were 2440 of Mr. Salt's workpeople, who had been brought from Bradford by special train, and several noblemen and members of Parliament graced the banquet with their presence. The new factory was likened to the palaces of the Cæsars, and for a time the public press busied itself diligently in describing the wonders of the place and the munificence of its founder. The illustrated papers gave views of Saltaire from all conceivable points; and poets chanted the praises of the edifice, and of the man who had planned it, in songs, odes, and lays innumerable. One of the best of the poetic compositions referred to was specially written for the occasion, at the instigation of the workpeople, by Mr. Robert Storey, a gentleman who was known as 'the Craven Poet,' and who had won the patronage and friendship of the Duke of Northumberland. It was entitled 'The Peerage of Industry,' and the particular chord of sentiment that it struck may be sufficiently instanced by a quotation of the first few lines, which ran as follows:

'To the praise of the peerage high harps
have been strung,
By minstrels of note and of fame;
But a peerage we have to this moment
unsung,
And why should they not have their
name?

Chorus.

For this is his praise—and who merit it
not
Deserve no good luck should o'ertake
them—
That while making his thousands he
never forgot
The thousands that helped him to
make them!

'Tis the peerage of Industry! Nobles
who hold
Their patent from Nature alone;
More genuine far than if purchased with
gold,
Or won, by mean arts, from a throne!"

This may not be very high-class poetry; but it expressed the feelings of the people, and was received with enthusiasm.

Sir William Fairbairn, under whose direction the engineering work in connection with the Saltaire factory was executed, has thus described this notable industrial establishment: 'The Saltaire mills,' he says, 'are situated in one of the most beautiful parts of the romantic valley of the Aire. The site has been selected with uncommon judgment as regards its fitness for the economical working of a great manufacturing establishment. The estate is bounded by highways and railways which penetrate to the very centre of the buildings, and is intersected by both canal and river. Admirable water is obtained for the use of the steam-engines, and for the different processes of the manufacture. By the distance of the mills from the smoky and cloudy atmosphere of a large town, unobstructed and good light is secured; whilst, both by land and water, direct communication is gained for the importation of coal and all other raw produce on the one hand, and for the exportation and delivery of manufactured goods on the other. Both portage and cartage are entirely superseded; and every other circumstance which could tend to economise production has been carefully considered.'

For simple beauty of situation Saltaire is almost unequalled. The great stone factory, so familiar to the railway-traveller who takes the Midland route to the North, has a frontage of 545 feet, and is six stories in height. It covers an area of ten acres, and is arranged in the form of the letter T. The Leeds and Liverpool canal washes one side of it, and a few yards lower down flows the

pleasant Aire ; while the Midland line runs close to the front of the building. An immense iron bridge, on a level and in a line with the main street of the town, stretches completely across railway, canal, and river, terminating at the entrance to the Saltaire Park, beyond which rise the wooded hills of Baildon and the rocks of far-famed Shipley Glen ; and to the right and left of the landscape stand the castellated mansions of Mr. Titus Salt jun. and Mr. Charles Stead, partners in the Saltaire firm. The dignity of Labour and the poetry of Nature have seldom been so happily intermingled as in this instance. The Italian style of architecture has been adopted, more or less, in all the buildings, from the factory down to the workpeople's cottages ; even the tall chimney which stretches skyward to the height of 250 feet has the appearance of a southern campanile ; and altogether the little town is both an architectural and a sanitary triumph. About four thousand operatives are employed at the works, and the provision that has been made for the comfort and social and mental improvement of them and their families is probably greater than was ever provided for any other community by a single man, and stamps the projector as one of the leading philanthropists of his time. Saltaire contains 800 dwelling-houses, all regularly and uniformly built of stone, and covering altogether an area of nearly twenty-six acres. Many of the houses have small plots of garden, and present a cheerful and picturesque appearance. The streets are all laid out in straight lines, and are clean and well-paved. The public buildings of Saltaire, however, are its chief boast, apart from the leviathan factory. There is a Congre-

gational church, which cost 16,000*l.*, and contains the Salt family mausoleum, which is enriched by some fine sculpture executed by Mr. Adams-Acton. Then there are schools, especially designed for Sunday instruction, built at a cost of 10,000*l.* ; a literary institute, with a library of several thousand volumes, and containing lecture-halls, classrooms, billiard-rooms, gymnasium, &c., built and furnished at a cost of 25,000*l.* ; baths and wash-houses, upon which 7000*l.* was expended ; forty-five almshouses, capable of accommodating seventy-five persons, and provided with suitable endowment ; and a fine park, fourteen acres in extent—all these are amongst the institutions and benefactions which the founder of Saltaire gave to his unique and picturesque alpaca colony. Everything that an enlightened and generous mind could conceive for the instruction and recreation of his workpeople was provided, till the town of Saltaire has come to be regarded by visitors with no less wonder than the 'works' themselves. One restriction only has been insisted upon, and that is, that no house for the sale of intoxicants should be opened in the town. Thus we have a community of some six thousand people existing in peace and harmony without a single beerhouse or public-house in their midst. True, there are a few houses of this description planted temptingly on the borderland of the colony ; but the Salts may be considered practically to have proved that the public-house is not a necessity of existence, for it is an undeniable fact that there is next to no drunkenness amongst this model community. Add to this, that the death-rate of Saltaire is low, that its criminal statistics are almost a blank page,

that rents and taxes are moderate, and we have a sort of working-class commonwealth which is fit to rank with the Utopias of the philosophers, or even the Hygienic dreams of such men as Dr. Richardson. The founder of Saltaire omitted nothing that would conduce to the comfort and well-being of his people; such high and noble aims as his have seldom been associated with a commercial undertaking, or carried out with such sincerity of purpose. Saltaire, indeed, is one of the brightest landmarks of the industrial history of our time.

From the period of the opening of the Saltaire mills there were associated with him in the conduct of his gigantic business some of his sons, as well as one or two other gentlemen who had held positions of management in his mills at Bradford. The sons—George, Edward, and Titus—have displayed much of the business sagacity and enterprise for which their father was remarkable; and their co-partner, Mr. Charles Stead, has, by his unremitting energy for the last quarter of a century, materially assisted in the sustainment of Saltaire's commercial greatness.

During the time that followed the building of Saltaire, Mr. Salt gave himself up more zealously than ever to the promotion of the public good. He was always to the front in any philanthropic work, and his charity was unbounded. It is estimated that, simply in benefactions that were publicly acknowledged, setting aside his private charities, which were known to be great, he gave away not less than half a million sterling. Amongst his most memorable gifts for charitable purposes may be mentioned a donation of 5000*l.* to the Bradford Fever Hospital, a gift of 5000*l.*

to the Royal Albert Asylum at Lancaster, 5000*l.* to the Sailors' Orphanage at Hull, 5000*l.* to the London Congregational Memorial Hall, 2500*l.* towards a new Congregational church at Scarborough, 1000*l.* to Peel Park, Bradford, 5000*l.* to the Bradford Infirmary, 5000*l.* to the Liberation Society, 1800*l.* to the Pastors' Retiring Fund, and 11,000*l.* to the Bradford Grammar Schools for scholarships. He gave handsomely all round; any cause that was in itself commendable, no matter by what sect or party it was promoted, was sure of his support. By his will his munificence was largely extended, a great number of charities being made recipients of his bounty. The provision he made for Saltaire alone was princely. He not only liberally endowed the schools there, and provided for their being carried on in the most efficient manner, but left a fund of 30,000*l.*, the income of which was to be appropriated for the benefit of the sick and aged poor of Saltaire and the neighbourhood, thus leaving an adequate endowment for the maintenance of the residents in the almshouses. It has been given to few men to amass so large a share of wealth as was got together by Titus Salt; fewer still have made such splendid use of an enormous fortune.

After the establishment of Saltaire, Mr. Salt did not withdraw himself from Bradford life, but continued to manifest a strong interest in the place where he had laid the foundation of his fortunes. In 1857 he was urged to allow himself to be put into nomination as a candidate for the representation of Bradford in Parliament, but he withdrew from the contest rather than divide his party, his friend General Perronet Thompson being one of the candidates.

In 1859, however, at the general election of that year, he was again pressed to permit himself to be brought forward, and, there being then no question of dividing his party, he consented, and was returned along with Mr. H. W. Wickham. It was never expected that a man of such unassuming manners and so little gifted with oratorical ability as Mr. Salt would blossom into a parliamentary luminary; but it was felt that he had earned the right to be accorded the highest honour that the town could give him, and the people elected him. Parliamentary life, however, was so utterly at variance with all his previous experience, and so little harmonised with his established habits, that he cannot be said to have taken to it at all kindly. He was out of his element. He had so long accustomed himself to the rattle of looms, the whirr of spindles, the surroundings of toiling men and women, and the sight of vast expanses of machinery, that he found it difficult to fit in with this totally different mode of life. He had accepted the post, however, and so long as he retained it he would endeavour, to the best of his ability, to fulfil its duties. 'His seat in the house,' says Mr. Balgarnie, 'was always occupied, and his name found on every division list. But within the walls of St. Stephen's his voice was never heard, except on some formal occasion, such as the presentation of a petition. To him it was a scene widely different from that with which he had long been familiar. Speaking had always been his weak point; but here it was his chief business. Early rising and retiring had been the rule of his life; now the long sittings, the heated atmosphere, irregular hours, both of diet and sleep, the exciting debates and

divisions, were enough to exhaust any man's energies, much more his, so unaccustomed to such an experience.' The upshot was that, after having endured this strain upon his health for about two years, he resigned his seat; and, in 1861, Mr. W. E. Forster was elected, without opposition, to fill his place, and Mr. Salt went back to his old life.

In 1867 Mr. Salt received from the Emperor of the French the decoration of the Legion of Honour. In 1869 her Majesty conferred the distinction of a baronetcy upon him, and thenceforward the title of the Saltaire-firm was 'Sir Titus Salt, Bart., Sons, & Co.'

In conveying the intimation of the Queen's offer to Mr. Salt, Mr. Gladstone said, 'Though we have not been so fortunate as to keep you within the precincts—perhaps I ought to say the troubled precincts—of parliamentary life, you have not failed by your station, character, and services, to establish an ample title to the honourable distinction which it is now my gratifying duty to place at your disposal.'

The high esteem in which Sir Titus Salt was always held by his workpeople has been repeatedly manifested. In 1856 they presented him with a colossal bust of himself; and in 1871 the people of Saltaire presented him with his portrait, painted by Mr. J. P. Knight, R.A., which was subsequently deposited in the Institute at Saltaire, and is a work of considerable merit. At the same time, 'the children of Saltaire' presented the baronet with two silver-plated breakfast dishes.

On his part, Sir Titus Salt was never wanting in demonstrating the regard in which he held those who laboured for him; and on two memorable occasions he in-

vited the whole of his workpeople to feast with him and his family at his own home. On the occasion of his birthday in 1856, when the bust was presented to him, he treated his workpeople, to the number of 3000, to a sumptuous banquet at Crow Nest, his residence, and there was great rejoicing. In 1873, the twentieth anniversary of the opening of Saltaire and his seventieth birthday, Sir Titus Salt gathered his workpeople around him once more at Crow Nest, and in greater numbers than before, the establishment at Saltaire having expanded since 1853. On the 20th of September 1873, no fewer than 4200 guests were entertained by Sir Titus, three special trains being chartered to convey them.

In 1874 Bradford erected a public statue, at a cost of 3000*l.*, to Sir Titus Salt—a very unusual honour to be paid to a man during his lifetime. The Duke of Devonshire undertook the duty of unveiling the statue, and many thousand people assembled to witness the ceremony. Lord F. Cavendish, M.P.; Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P.; Mr. John Crossley, M.P.; Mr. H. W. Ripley, M.P.; and many other distinguished persons, were present on the occasion, and all joined in bearing testimony to the noble qualities of the man whose good deeds they were commemorating. The erection of this statue was an act which Sir Titus Salt would fain had been postponed until he had passed away.

Sir Titus Salt's health began to decline in the early part of 1876, and his visits to Saltaire became less frequent. On Friday the 29th December in that same year he died, at Crow Nest; and on the 6th January 1877 his remains were consigned to their last resting-place in the family

mausoleum at Saltaire, and such a funeral was given him as has seldom been witnessed, over 100,000 people assembling in the streets of Bradford to see the funeral *cortége* pass.

Thus ended the life and labours of a true Englishman, whose business enterprise and sagacity built him a princely fortune, whose charitable deeds placed him amongst the foremost philanthropists of this or any other age, and whose memory will be warmly cherished in this country as long as true worth and high example continue to be revered. As the creator of a new industry he has been the means of adding, in a remarkable degree, to the manufacturing eminence and commercial wealth of the country, but especially of the district which derived, in the first instance, the direct benefit of his skill and enterprise.

The present owners and managers of Saltaire carry on the works and uphold the town and its institutions with the same regard to the social and moral elevation of the people as was evinced by their founder; and Saltaire still remains one of the chief industrial wonders of the world, and is an enduring monument to the true greatness of a commercial leader and a Christian gentleman.

The present baronet is Sir William Henry Salt, of Maplewell, near Loughborough, who was born in 1831, and did not adopt a commercial career. In 1854 he married Emma Dove Octaviana, the only child of Mr. John Dove Harris, of Ratcliffe Hall, Leicester. Sir William Henry Salt is a magistrate for the West Riding of Yorkshire and for Leicestershire, a deputy lieutenant of Leicestershire, and high sheriff of the latter county.

MY LOVE LOVES ME.

'Tis the last bright hour of a magic time,
The waking close of a summer dream ;
I shall soon be far from the ocean chime,
From the sleeping hills and the voiceful stream.
And I ever have lingered, loth to part,
O sweetest of western vales, from thee ;
But I leave thee now with a bounding heart,
For I know to-day that my love loves me !

From the cornfields glowing with August bloom,
From the sea's soft blue, from the wind-swept down,
I go to my lonely London room,
To the dust and din of the work-worn town.
But a gay farewell to the golden fields,
And a light adieu to the laughing sea !
All longing to linger passes, and yields
To the thrill of the thought that my love loves me.

So I cheerly turn me to work again,
Life runs in its daily round once more ;
But the stress of thought and the sweat of brain
Have lost the hardness that erst they wore.
For with strange new glory the world is bright,
That never before was on land or sea ;
And all things move in a mist of light,
For joy that I know that my love loves me.

I know by the touch of her tell-tale hand,
I read in the rose-blush bloom of her cheek
The lore that a lover can understand,
The wordless language that hearts can speak.
Yet I hunger to hear it in accents low,
And I look and long for the day to be,—
The golden day when I sure shall know
From her own true lips that my love loves me.

H. C. S.

AIR AND REST IN NORMANDY.

AMONG the many attractive places of interest and enjoyment in Normandy very few are more attractive than bright, gay, sparkling Etretat. It affords abundance of resources to the idle; ever-ready material for the brush and pencil of the artist; quiet and refreshment to the worn-out mind and frame of the worker; ample opportunity for the display of the *toilette*, with less strain upon its expense than at the more magnificent Trouville, Havre, or Dieppe; and above all, a perfect opportunity of rest and quiet recreation.

To the student of manners and customs this little seaport presents unusual opportunities. Side by side, during the holiday months, are to be found the simple and unchanged habits of the old Norman fishermen and the far more artificial and varying manners of the dwellers in cities, to whom freshness and simplicity are the charm; but even here the tyranny of fashion and caste are to some extent the necessity.

In the people of Etretat may be seen the simple and religious seriousness which is the outcome of primitive chivalry. But, as we are told, there is also plenty of simple mirth and festive relaxation. Winter evenings of dance and song, when the squall and the tempest are shut out, and the only fears are those produced by stories of ghost and goblin; saints'-days when religion and recreation are simply and naturally blended together; processions made for prayer to the ocean, where

hymns and petitions are chanted to move the God of tide and storm to restrain His power;—these are not seen or heard by us who visit Etretat in the bright holiday months of July, August, or September; but they form the excitement of those simple fisher-folk when Parisians, Londoners, and Americans are more artificially and less wholesomely employed.

To the naturalist Etretat furnishes a vast museum for study. It possesses a marine menagerie, where oysters, mussels, crabs, shrimps, and all the wonders of the sea, animal and vegetable, submit their habits and customs to the prying eye of the stranger with the same quiet and dignified indifference as that of their human fellow-inhabitants.

The geologist will find ample interest in examining the alluvial strata which compose the beds of sand, the rocks, and cliffs of the place. He will look with interest upon the phenomenon of the sudden disappearance of the river which used to water and fertilise the valley and the town; and the horizontal layers of rock of which are formed the magnificent cliffs which bound this charming little bay.

There is also ample material of interest for the antiquary. The coast of Normandy is all peculiarly rich in such store; but Etretat possesses more than usual of it. Iron remains evidently bearing date of the times of the Cæsars, silver vases dedicated to Mercury, bas-reliefs, consular and imperial medals, and many other larger

monuments have been discovered to show that Etretat held no unimportant place even in Roman times.

But it is to the more modern and less severe aspect of the place that we desire to draw the attention of such of our readers as have not judged for themselves of the summer attractions of this charming holiday corner.

Alphonse Karr, the French writer, who is traditionally supposed by his novels and *feuilletons* to have brought Etretat into notice, describes the first view of the little town thus: 'About twenty miles from Havre lies the little port of Etretat. The road from Havre rises through fields which give no notion of proximity to the sea. It seems as if one were in a plain of Bœotia. But at last, at the summit of the rising ground, the horizon appears, and at a distance of 500 feet below sparkles the clear bright sea, an unexpected and magnificent sight! Etretat is not a port constructed by the hand of man; it is a natural bay between cliffs composed of vast perpendicular rocks. The village lies between two hills, which are covered with gorse and thick thorn-bushes, whose yellow flowers are so dense, that at a distance they glitter in the sun like a vast golden carpet. Beyond this the sea presents a background of dark blue and heat-clouds rising from the horizon. Vessels of all sizes are seen in the distance, with their white sails swollen by the fresh east wind, and look like stately swans gliding along the ocean.'

So far the description of the romancist, which, although a little over-coloured, is in the main no more than the beauty of the place may claim. After this a little guide-book information may not be out of place. Etretat, a village

of 1906 inhabitants, is situated in the Channel on the coast of Normandy, north-east of Cape Antifer, and between two valleys, the Grand Val and the Petit Val. The bay is terminated by two vast limestone cliffs about 300 feet in height. The valley, on the land side, was formerly defended by a wall and a tower of the time of Henri Quatre, a portion of which still exists. The position of the town, which is lower than the high-tide level, is protected from the sea by a beach of large shingles, which serves to keep back the waves, except on exceptional occasions, when the town has been inundated by the sea breaking over this natural barrier. Every year, on the festival of the Ascension, the clergy of the place go in formal procession to bless the sea, and order it to keep within the limits of safety. The perils of freshwater inundations have also been encountered. The inland country has been subject to the overflow of a river, which some time ago disappeared, only to present itself again on the beach at low water, of which more hereafter.

Etretat has no harbour. Forty years ago it was only a poor hamlet, inhabited by rude fishermen. M. Isabez, the French painter, first proclaimed the beauty of the place, and soon attracted artists and men of letters to the spot. Le Poitevin painted Etretat; Alphonse Karr wrote it up, and had a street named after him for his pains. By degrees comfortable houses and elegant villas began to spring up, and French artists, writers, singers, poets, *joueurs* and *joueuses* (from *les petits chevaux* upwards) frequented the newly-opened casino. English artists and *savants*, hearing of the fresh charm of the place and its easiness of access, met each other there by charming

accident, and dreamed on their chairs on the *galets*, and joined in admiration of the timid grace of the fair and picturesque *baigneuses*, or the manly exploits of the broad-shouldered zebra-clad Englishmen, who slipped so gently and so shudderingly into the high-created wave.

In former times Etretat furnished no mean quota to the naval marine of France. In an authorised list of the French sea-forces published in 1819, we find that Etretat supplied no fewer than five vessels to the fleet of Normandy, which consisted altogether of one hundred and fifty sail. The contingent of this small place was equal to that of Cherbourg and Port Audemer, and superior to those of Fécamp, Touques, and Quief-de-Caux. Up to 1850 the number of fishing-boats on the beach was twenty-five or thirty, according to the prosperity of the times. These were large vessels, each manned by ten men, and were chiefly occupied in the herring-fishery off Dieppe. But now the fishing has changed its character, and only small boats are employed with three men in each, which merely take those fish which are near their own coast. In former times the return of a boat was known by the number on its sail, and notice was immediately given by the *mousses de terre* to the wives and sisters of the crew, who ran to *man* the capstan on the beach, by which the vessel is dragged up at once, cargo and all, on to the shingle, out of reach of the waves. The custom still prevails; and it is a matter of hourly occurrence to see the boats drawn up solely by the exertions of the women, and very often the children of the crews. Etretat having no enclosed harbour, but a steep beach of large round pebbles, this is the only

means of securing the vessels against the sudden contingencies of wind and tide.

‘*Trahuntque siccas machinæ carinas.*’

High and dry on the beach there are old boats fixed and covered with thatch. These are called *caloges*, and are used as storehouses for nets, cordage, and ships’ stores of every kind, and add much to the picturesque appearance of the place. These home-boats—à la Peggotty—are peculiar to Etretat, and give an originality to the scene, supplying with subjects the canvases of the more humble artists.

The moment that the boat is secured, the fish are landed, and the sale commences. The beach-master puts a price upon each lot as it is offered, and the bidding goes on frequently with much spirit, and apparently with the most perfect unconsciousness of the presence of the gaily-dressed crowd of French, English, and Americans, who have just left their bathing-cabins, or have interrupted their ante-prandial walk on the terrace of the casino to assist at this primitive auction. The purchasers carry off their fish then and there, and in a very short time they are despatched to the nearest station for Rouen or Paris. The quarter of the little town where this fishing-population resides is hidden from the sight of the visitor, unless he choose to dive behind the rows of newly-built shops and lodging-houses of the second-rate kind. But, indeed, the beach itself is the place to study—not to speak as an Irishman—the domestic life of this active and industrious population. No sooner is the cargo disposed of, and the long boots of the weather-beaten fishermen pulled off, and comfortable soft-lined *sabots* substituted for them, than the

business of preparing the nets, &c. for the next tide's draught begins. The women pass by with bundles of linen, on their way to the *source* or washing-place; round-faced clear-eyed boys, just on the verge of being fishermen, hover officiously round their elders; girls with children almost as big as themselves in their arms, struggling for freedom like rebellious kittens, lounge about the artists who have placed themselves under sketching-tents, and utter their natural criticisms with naïve boldness, if not with critical skill.

The small fishing-craft are what is called 'clinker built,' and are managed with great dexterity. They seem to come and go like birds. The fishing-trade of Etretat is very different from what it was twenty or more years ago. The kind of fish taken varies of course with the season. The mackerel, the only fish which is now certain in the waters of Etretat, is plentiful during the summer months. The herring is taken towards the end of autumn. This fishing is not confined to the immediate vicinity, but extends to the waters of Dieppe, and is generally so remunerative as to support the fishermen's families during the winter. In earlier times the variety of fish was much greater. Then the roadstead of Etretat supplied shoals of whiting, soles, dabfish, &c. Mullet, barble, greyling were to be found at the two extremities of the bay, while eels swarmed in the half-fresh 'fountain' and streams. Oysters and crabs paved, so to speak, the bottom of the harbour, and lobsters filled the holes and corners of the rocks. *Eheu fugaces!* We do not find them now. The thick and sluggish conger is still brought to shore at every tide; and besides these indigenous fishes, the accounts of ancient mariners tell of

the presence of almost every marine living treasure that could be clad in silver and golden scales. But the absence of the herring is the subject of Etretat's deepest and saddest regret. This wandering fish, which comes down each year from the north to enrich the coasts of Normandy, no longer makes its appearance, as in times of old, in immense shoals, but is eaten, as experts say, by the dog-fish, which follow like vultures in the rear of a great army.

But to pass from piscine to human celebrities. From this humble beach of Etretat many men have gone forth who have made their mark in the navy and mercantile marine of France. We will speak of three from one famous family, that of the Vallins.

The first is Etienne Vallin, who died from an attack of cholera in 1832, on board a French vessel then stationed on the coast of Spain. He distinguished himself at the battle of Navarino, 20th October 1827. For his bravery in this great action he received the Cross of the Legion of Honour, and was appointed to the command of a frigate. The second, who died on 2d December 1840, was Pierre Vallin, cousin of the above. At the end of a laborious and praiseworthy career he held the high office of lieutenant-governor of the harbour of Cherbourg, and was in command of the frigate *Belle Poule* in which the Prince de Joinville brought to France the body of Napoleon. He died suddenly, as was said, from the excitement of meeting the Prince and the officers with whom he had previously served. But other causes could probably be found.

The third and most illustrious was Benoît Vallin, born at Etretat 30th November 1769. At the age of twenty-three he served on board the *Indomptable*, and during

the ten years of the war under the first Republic he was present at no less than fourteen sea-fights, finishing with that *combat de géants*, under Lord Howe on the English side, which lasted three days, and is called by the Norman sailors 'le grand combat du 13,' fought in 1794. From his great knowledge of the Channel he was chosen to command one of the divisions of the naval force at Boulogne in 1805, and had many opportunities of meeting the English forces there during the following three years. He served in various civil capacities and in offices of trust. After having revisited his native village of Etretat, he took up his abode at Rouen, where he died at the advanced age of eighty-seven, full of years and honour. Thus this humble bay, lying between two rocks of Normandy, has furnished to the navy of its country many a 'marin d'élite et une nature fortement trépanée,' of which the family of the Vallins, more numerous at Etretat than that of Fabius at Rome, has furnished notable examples.

Another curious element of Etretat's resources is its underground springs of freshwater. These springs are mysteriously connected with a river which flowed formerly through the Grand Val, and emptied itself into the sea at Etretat. This stream was of considerable importance not only for the usual purposes of the locality, but for its usefulness in driving many mills. Its source and its course are actually shown to this day; and although we have no authentic date for the time of its actual disappearance, the following story inevitably relates the manner of the event: A woman in the shape of a tramp—as we should say—came one evening to Grainville l'Allouette with her

child in her arms. She knocked at the miller's door, whose mill was turned by this same river close to its source. She asked for supper and lodging; but the miller, who was a hard and stern man, drove her from the door. 'Wretch,' said the fairy, for such she seems to have been, 'you will repent of this!' and immediately the mill ceased to turn, because the stream had instantly disappeared! These waters seem now to have worked a way for themselves under the valley, and at low tide they spring up on the beach, after having supplied the wells of the village. Alphonse Karr gives a true and graphic account of the scene at the 'fountain.' 'As soon as the receding sea allows the brook of freshwater to discover itself, almost all the women of the place appear with bundles of linen on their backs. By means of their beating-sticks basins are formed by scooping out the stones from the bed of the stream. Then they are down on their knees, and work as it were against the hour when the returning sea shall drive them away by taking possession of their workshop. This work is dependent on the tides and the season. It may be truly said that there are no fixed hours at Etretat. Meals, occupations, work, recreations, are all a matter of high or low tide. Thus it is the morning, sometimes midday, sometimes midnight, which sees these busy women at the "fountain." A curious effect is produced by looking down from the cliff, or even from the sea, on these untiring workers, each with her lantern placed on the *galets* beside her. It seems as if a multitude of will-o'-the-wisps or glow-worms were giving out here and there their phosphorescent lights. It is with peculiar interest that every one who has been present at

one of these fountain *réunions* must describe it. There, every one speaks of everything and everybody. Every one's faults are discussed, every one's good qualities, it is fair to say, are to some extent acknowledged. The judgment of the fountain is irreversible, and from it there is no appeal. From the defective administration of the mayor on the bench, to the irreverent behaviour of Genevieve So-and-so at mass last Sunday, all are brought under discussion. The *source* in this little community takes the place of the Exchange, the *café*, of twenty newspapers; it is there we learn the news of the fishermen, the loves and marriages of the young people of the town, the price of fish at Fécamp or Havre; there we learn the cause and effect of the last gale, the dreadful dreams of the preceding night. It is not too much to say that all the news of Etretat are told at this spot—and perhaps a little more!

The Church of Notre Dame d'Etretat is one of the division of Cricquetot l'Esneval. The nave is of plain Romanesque, with a wooden ceiling. The west door has been well restored. Part of the nave, choir, transepts, and apse with square end are of the thirteenth century. The great feature of the church is the groined lantern in the same style. The effect of the interior is solemn and striking; composed of Roman arches, supported by short massive pillars, it represents one of the most interesting types of Romanesque architecture; but the ecclesiologist will discover all its beauties for himself in the many quiet hours at his disposal. A technical description is outside the purpose of this paper. In 1850 three new bells were cast for the church, to replace one a hundred years old which had

been broken in the beginning of that year. Perhaps the curious reader would like to know the names by which those melodious voices were christened. The first is called 'Marie-Céleste,' the second 'Alexandrine-Clarisse,' and the third 'Pauline-Adèle,' and they all three, as the writer can testify, discourse most excellent music, sweet and low as becomes their sex. L'Eglise de Notre Dame is quite on the outskirts of the town; and to account for this inconvenient situation there is a legend which every man, woman, and child in Etretat knows, and is too happy to tell. If you were to ask any one for this story he would probably ask you to go with him from the beach up to a rock called 'the Fountain of Olivia,' which is only visible at high tide, and is regarded by your guide with great religious reverence. There he will recite his tale: A pious and rich lady, named Olivia, used to bathe or to *wash her linen* in the fountain which you see at the foot of the rock. One day she was surprised by a band of pirates, when she immediately took to flight, and vowed in her terror that she would build a church to the Virgin, if the Holy Mother would rescue her. She was saved, and immediately began to fulfil her vow by laying down materials for building on a convenient spot her thankoffering. But every stone which had been laid during the day was transported during the night by the Evil One to the Petit Val, at the foot of the Cote St. Clair, quite out of the town. This was done so persistently that the devil had the best of it, and the pious foundress no longer tried to curb him of his will, but secured the church for her town, although at some distance from it. This inconvenience is, how-

ever, removed now; the population of the higher class has nearly surrounded the church, and avenues of flower-buried villas—the holiday retreats of wealthy Parisians—lead up to it. These villas and châteaux form a remarkable feature of Etretat. Among them we may mention the beautiful chateau of Madame Maillard, with its garden and studio; the *donjon* of M. Paz; and the chateau of M. Boyen, built in the style of Louis XIII.

But how to spend a quiet day at Etretat? We will suppose that the reader—like the writer—has found himself under the roof of the Hôtel Blanquet, *ancien auberge*, but *auberge* no longer, which Isabey and Karr found waiting to be made famous. Let into the gable-wall is a medallion portrait of the latter, surmounting an original painting of the beach by Le Poitevin. The house stands close to the beach at the top of the Rue Alphonse Karr. Outside in the yard all is bustle, inside all is method, *propreté*—how much this French word implies!—and comfort. Monsieur Desiré, the ever-civil ever-ready landlord, is everywhere at once; Madame, of the raven locks and flashing eyes, is keeping the servants up to their work; while Madame la Belle-mère, the hostess of the original *auberge*, presides over matters of finance in the little alcove at the door, calm and quiet—and how quiet an old Frenchwoman can be!—amid the hubbub. At seven o'clock sturdy but neat-handed Genevieve brings your coffee and news of the weather. Incontinent you rise, and throwing open the window you take your part at once in the business of the day. There is no half-waking at Etretat; no miserable 'pulling of yourself together.' The fresh sea-breeze hustles you

into condition. The fisher-folks are all at their work, and never thinking of you, who have come to their place to pay ten francs a day, besides the casino. The artists are seated scantily clothed, and brow-beating the *caloge* or the *cabestan*, of which they are painting a 'nautical bit' to charm the eyes of city-bound Parisians. The waves are rolling up, hustling the *galets* on the bathing-place, and seeming to invite all-comers to a rude but salubrious embrace. You dress, and sit down to an hour's hard work. Then to the terrace of the casino, where all do congregate. The two amphibious bathing-men are there, as always, in their pink jerseys, the never-failing throat-comforter, and with their arms placed shiveringly akimbo. By and by you gratefully hear the well-known Blanquet bell, and you wend your way complaisantly to where an excellent *déjeuner* awaits you. After this meal plans are formed for the day. A walk along the Cote d'Aval, on the fresh breezy upland, from which you can look down *into* the deep blue sea; or up the Falaise d'Amont to the Seaman's Chapel, with its simple votive thankofferings, and on by the Semaphore to the Chaudrin and the Aiguille de Bénouville (for which see guide-book) and to the Ferme du Père Isaac, where a very primitive host dispenses *sous les pommiers* most excellent curaçoa at six sous a glass. And then back again through fertile valleys to the blue and ever-present sea.

Other and longer walks are those to Les Loges, a quaint and characteristic Norman village with a striking church; to St. Jouin, a fishing-village with sheer cliffs and fresh sea, to which the charms of a certain Mdlle. Ernestine, 'the landlord's fair daughter,'

seem to have attracted many of the *savants* and *littérateurs* of the early life of Etretat. Ernestine seems to have inspired many a pen and pencil, to judge by the manner in which the walls of the *salon* of the Hôtel de Paris are covered with verses, *croquis*, and really finished pictures signed by well-known names, e.g. Picon, Hamon, Alexandre Dumas fils, &c., and many English authors of note. We saw Ernestine in the flesh, and could not realise her early powers of inspiration. She is a burly black-eyed French matron surrounded by bullet-headed children, and seemed to be surprised and mildly flattered when we pointed to her description in our guide-book, and asked if we had the privilege and happiness to look upon the real Ernestine. Her 'Mais oui, Monsieur!' showed that she had learned to appraise a guide-book reputation for what it was worth, and to estimate the sentiment of the past at its present money value. From St. Jouin a pleasant route of return is through Bruneval, the abode of Conty, of guide celebrity. M. Conty has bought a large extent of *terrain* here, with a view, it is said, of setting up the place as a rival to Etretat. It is at present the abode of Cockneydom, and on house and wall are obtruded the motto of the owner: 'Ne voyagez pas sans les Guides Conty!' Here, however, there is an exceedingly good and well-managed restaurant.

Arrived at home, you—being a gormandising Englishman—have a *brioche* and glass of Madeira at Madame Baudain's in Rue Alphonse Karr; spend your money in photographs at Fossey's, or in old furniture and china with intelligent M. Noblecour at his museum, Au Vieux Rouen, Route du Havre. An hour is spent on

the beach watching the bathers. These deserve a paper to themselves; for it is in truth to bathe that people say that they go to Etretat. But they go to *dress* as well as undress, and *also to talk*. The beach is very inconvenient for walking down on account of the loose stones, of which it is entirely composed. The dressing-cabins stand at the top of this beach, whence the bathers descend to the sea, in all conceivable colours and enveloped in a *peignoir*, by means of planks laid upon the *galets*. Sea-bathing on the coasts of Normandy is too well known to most readers of papers on France to require us to repeat it here. It is amusingly described by a writer of the day: 'Presently the sun gets hot, and you go down to the shore and bathe. Augustine the fat, the bunchy, the smiling, brings you a *maillot*. Clad in this comfortable garb, and throwing a sheet about you, you trip down the boards, and enjoy a feeling of superiority when you feel all eyes turned to behold you swimming out to sea. Family groups are bathing together beside you. Father of family and circle of children bobbing with shrieks up and down; next to them some *ancien* dame of high Norman lineage gravely bobbing, held by both hands by the amphibious one, who spends his days in the water, and never catches rheumatism.' Truly sentiment and duty are charmingly combined at a French watering-place.

At last the climax of every French day is reached, and the remainder of the evening is given up to the joys of the casino. If the *passion du jeu* pervade your mind, a mysterious inner room opens its doors to you, where, after a few exciting hours, you may leave every napoleon behind.

If you are bent upon more innocent pleasures, you may assist at the silent harmless polka or mazurka of the ballroom, or the boisterous comedy or *opéra bouffe*. A clever writer (or rather writers) humorously describes the casino at Norman bathing-places thus: 'Ah, the casino! It is the home of all dazzling pleasures. There is a theatre, with a stage the size of a dining-room table. Then the ballroom, with a piano and violin for music; no better music can be found. And there are the young bloods of the place panting for the fray, with waxed moustache and patent-leather boots,

the Don Juans of a thousand harmless amourettes.' And he truly adds: 'At eleven o'clock you may go to bed, because, if you sit up, you will be the only soul awake in all the town.' And you sleep the sleep of childhood, lulled and soothed by the rising waves, trouble and worry erased for the time from the vocabulary of your experience; until Genevieve, the ever-punctual, ever-cheerful, appears to the moment with coffee and *brioche*, and assures you that 'it makes magnificent time,' and that monsieur will of course immediately get up, because he is '*toujours si matinal*.'

HALF AN HOUR WITH A SPORTING PROPHEET.

SOME short time ago, owing to the excellent arrangements of the Great Eastern Railway, I found myself landed at the Newmarket Station in advance of the time fixed for the first race. The day was not a very pleasant one; and feeling disinclined to leave the station I amused myself by scrutinising my fellow-passengers until they left the platform, and then, going into the waiting-room, seated myself by the fire. I had not been there long before a man I had noticed selling cards on the platform came in; he was rather a remarkable-looking man, with clean-shaven face, small dark eyes, and had a very shrewd, not to say cunning, look about him; a very shiny 'topper,' and highly-polished, but very seedy, boots, added to his appearance; and as we were the sole occupants of the room began a conversation. Soon, however, taking a seat at the table, he produced a large bundle of telegraph-forms from his pocket and began filling them up very rapidly. Presently noticing, I suppose, that I was looking with rather a curious eye at his work, he took up several of them, and, pushing them over to me, said,

'There, sir, that's what I am doing.'

On reading them I found they were all telegrams relating to betting and turf-matters to be sent off to young fellows at Cambridge, London, &c. under various pseudonyms—'The Boy round the Corner,' 'Weasel,' 'Auceps,' 'Viator,' &c.; some were to back No. 2 for the Two Thousand,

others various other numbers, and one telegram stated amongst other things that Mat Dawson had sent a certain horse a stiff mile and a half gallop that day; this I knew to be untrue, and told the man so, to which he coolly replied,

'Bless you, sir, what does it signify! They likes to fancy themselves well posted up in racing, and think that they have private information about the horses' work.'

I was very much amused at the man's impudence, and asked him if he really was the person who advertised in the sporting papers under all those names. He at once acknowledged it, and said he made a very tidy living by it. Seeing, I suppose, that I was very much amused by his story, he went on:

'I does it all quite respectable, and has my regular list and subscribers. Trials is *extry*; and I expects five per cent on winnings.' Then growing confidential he added, 'This is how I works it; I takes the list of the horses entered for any big race—the Derby and suchlike—and numbers them all down regular; then I gets out my "Weasel" paper and begins: No. 1 is a good horse, and must be kept on the right side of the book; No. 2 ought to about win; No. 3 comes from a dangerous stable; No. 4 we should recommend if he had not run so cowardly in the Dewhurst Plate, however another course may suit him better; No. 5 is in the same stable as No. 3, and directly we know their intentions

will forward them ; No. 6 is about held safe by No. 1 ; and so on. Then I goes on as "Viator," and takes the list "t'other" way up, and begins from the end ; and next I begin as "Anceps" from the middle, and works down ; and then as "The Boy round the Corner," I begins in the middle, and works up—what a Cambridge gent once called "permutations," and "combinations," and that's how I does it, you see, sir. I don't say none mayn't win, so I must be right ; and then if they wants more "particlars," them "extry."

'But,' said I, 'how about the trials that are extra ?'

'Well, sir,' he replied, 'you see I charges heavy fees for they. They ain't altogether pleasant things to be caught at, and I can't say as I holds with going near them, so I puts the fee at a high figure so as to choke them off ; for,' added he, putting on an appearance of intense honesty, 'I don't like to rob people, and always gives them a chance for their money. Besides, I has my character' (here he drew himself up in a dignified way) 'to keep up.'

'But do you get paid on your clients' winnings?' I asked.

'O yes,' he replied ; 'pretty fair for that.'

'But isn't your dodge seen through?' said I.

'Lor bless you, no, sir,' he said. 'I don't send no "dead uns," and gives them all a chance ; and then when they wins they are just pleased, and says what a wonderful chap "Viator" is, always right. And then them that loses don't like to say so, and either holds their tongues or "purtends" they've won ; so it works that way.'

'Your principal employers, I see, come from London and Cambridge ; don't you get any from Oxford?' I remarked.

'Why, no, sir, not as a rule ; they're too sharp there, and many of the young gents' governors keeps racers. I was at Oxford myself once, sir.'

Seeing me look surprised, as he did not give one the idea of a graduate, he added : 'Assisting a gentleman in the tobacco-business, —leastways, he *called* it that ; but he made his money by other things, and at last he carried on so, and got so unparliamentary, that the dons dropped on to him, and he got discommonsed, and had to reduce his establishment ; so I left. But Cambridge is a different place altogether ; "the scums,"' as he politely termed them, 'sends their sons there, "competitioners" and "standards"' (what he meant by this last term I have not any idea) ; 'and they lives in such holes and corners and up-stairs where an Oxford gent would not keep his dog. But you would be surprised, sir,' he went on, 'if you knew half the people that writes to me for "tips." Lots of ladies writes too, not that they write in their own names ; but I spots them at once, they always wants a "certainty," and tries to alter their writing to make it look big and round and man-like ; but they always forgets, and makes the first letter natural, and then tries to go on big, but some of their peaky letters and long tails will drop in, so I always twigs them ; and then they're so fond of promises. Blessed if I don't think every sort but bishops comes to me.'

Just at this point, another train coming in, he had to run off to sell his race-cards ; so his revelations came to an end. But the conversation was literally and exactly as I have stated it, and I can say in corroboration of the man's description of the way he worked his 'permutations' and

'combinations,' as they had been termed, that, seeing amongst the telegrams two addressed to persons that I knew, I took the trouble to make inquiries of them, and as I was in possession of the secret discovered at once that the plan was worked as the man told me.

Now this story is literally true, the only exception being that I have altered the pseudonyms that

the man used. As may be imagined, I was greatly amused at these candid revelations. Of course I knew that 'tips' were the utterest humbug; but had thought that they came from stable-boys or odd men about the racing-stables who tried to add to their wages by this means, and had no idea that they were merely the offspring of the brain of an unscrupulous vagabond.

QUEEN ALINE.

(Adapted from the French of Arsène Houssaye.)

I SAW on the hill a little queen,
Bare-footed, and the wanton winds in her hair,
Aline!
Dreaming in youth's innocence, so fair!

For her all things around
Smiled; and the roses, trailing her path along,
Kissing the ground,
Swayed in the breeze, and rustled a soft low song.

On the hill-side soon she was seen,
With her bosom swelling in mirth and glee,
Aline!
As she went singing over the lea.

Laughed at the rebel, fresh and sweet,
A soldier who saw; and he came once, twice.
Why did they meet?
For priceless innocence paid her price.

On the hill my queen,
Crimson-cheeked, and heavy-eyed with fears,
Aline!
Passed alone, sorrow-crowned, in tears;

While the faithless soldier, young and gay,
Clinketh his glass, like a free gallant,
Far away,
'Sing love, sing wine,' for his careless chant.

Yet once again to the hill I've been;
There, since spring has the hawthorn drest,
Aline
Sleeps for ever in perfect rest.

A STORY OF AN INDIAN RACE-MEET.

CHAPTER I.

THE COURSE.

It was late in the afternoon of a January day; the sun was sinking lower and lower over Cuchuahigar, but, as if unwilling to depart without a final burst of splendour, lit the waters of the lake, which lies on the outskirts of that small civil station, with dazzling brilliancy. Defying the pencil of painter, the pen of poet, to depict them, the rich colours mingle and glow: above, they melt through every rainbow hue, from the faintest shades of opal, blue, and green, to the deepest crimson and violet; below, in the sheeny ripple, they fade from the crimson to the blue again; islands of gold and purple float in the sea of light, and across it a dark low-lying belt of land stretches, immovable and unchanging. To the left the land widens out towards us; and among the rich Indian foliage we can see large palace-like buildings or low white bungalows surrounded by bright flower-gardens which reach here and there to the water's edge. Behind us lies Cuchuahigar; and stretching from the shores of the lake on our right is a large expanse of unshaded turfy ground, bounded, on the farther side from the waters, by trees and jungles, and merging in the distance in the dark belt of land that divides the sky and water before us.

This turfy stretch is 'the Course,' and its monotony is at present unbroken, save perhaps by the dusky half-clad figures of

a few 'dhobies,' or washermen, who, with their miserable ghastly-looking donkeys, wend their way wearily home from the water. All is still and at rest here, bathed in a sleepy glow of warmth and light. The lipping waters murmur softly among the reeds near the shore; the branches of a few trees near, bent by the lightest of breezes, stoop softly to kiss their graceful shadows in the waters; no harsh sound reaches us, and even the hum of the bazaar has a soothing influence. The far-away murmur is suggestive, however, of the bustle and stir going on in the streets behind us, and our fancy can picture them not unpleasantly, safe from this racket and din.

There we can fancy the dark-skinned sparsely-clad men and women, who move in crowds to and fro, bargaining and chattering with those they meet, or with those who sit cross-legged in open booths behind their outspread wares. We can picture the young women, carrying on their heads baskets or earthen vessels filled with water or native food, their bright black eyes glancing swiftly to right or left beneath the well-balanced burden as they move erect and firm along; or old filthy-looking hags, with wizened faces and indifferent gaze, who sit, with their knees huddled up to their chins, smoking their hookahs with calm stolidity; and here and there perhaps more richly-clad natives, who strut with pompous pharisaical air among the throng. Creaking native

carts, drawn by dull heavy-eyed bullocks, are jostled unceremoniously about; jangling springless vehicles hurry recklessly along; but, above all and through all, little naked miserable children squeal and creep and squat about, regardless alike of the feet of man or beast.

From our quiet retreat we can see the water-carriers, characteristic of the hour, come to the bend of the lake, where the river that flows through it issues forth again; fill their unwieldy-looking bags, and trot away to sprinkle their refreshing burden on the hot dusty roads; and louder and louder, as the sun sinks lower, drowning the hum of voices, there comes from the bazaars the sound of jangling bells and creaking wheels, for the offices are closing for the day, and the natives in their noisy vehicles are streaming homewards.

Gradually the sharper sound of horses' hoofs, and the even rumbling of well-oiled wheels, like the tones of some low clear music, can be distinguished among the confusion of harsher notes; and carriages, breaking on the stillness, curve round the bend of the river, and sweep along by the shores of the lake.

In one of the first of these carriages sit two elderly ladies and a young girl.

'Dear me!' ejaculates the elder and stouter of the two, who recline luxuriously in the back seat of the carriage, 'I told you, Emily, that the clocks could not be right; see how high the sun still is.'

'Ah, well, what does it matter?' answers the other listlessly; 'and there are some others and our own party here, at any rate.'

'Yes, there are a few,' rejoins the first speaker. 'The course will be lively to-night, I daresay;

they say there are a great many in for this meet.'

The carriages swept on by the shore of the lake; then, turning across the turf, returned by another way near to the entrance of the course again. As that in which the three ladies sat passed by on a second tour, a party of riders issued from the road and came swiftly towards it.

'I hear riders coming, surely; who are they, Cissy?' queried Mrs. Campbell, mother of the young girl who sat facing her, and sister of the third occupant of the carriage, Mrs. Ricart.

Cissy Campbell leant lightly forward, and, glancing at the newcomers, answered softly,

'Some of Mrs. Stevenson's party, I think, mamma; they have mustered a good number.'

Almost as the girl spoke, the riders came alongside. Mrs. Campbell bowed haughtily. Cissy smiled, and nodded freely; but, as her eye passed lightly over the party, she started slightly and bowed again, whilst a crimson flush rose over neck and face, and her eyes lit up unconsciously.

Mrs. Campbell, a languid-looking showily-dressed woman, surveyed her daughter with surprise, and looking at the riders again remarked somewhat pointedly, 'Captain Lambert was not there, Cissy, was he?'

'No,' answered the girl, and she put her hand to her face to hide her confusion.

'No, no,' said the other occupant of the carriage, a sneer seeming to lurk in her tones, though she smiled sweetly enough. 'But I think I see an old flame of Miss Cissy's there.'

'Who then?' asked Mrs. Campbell.

'A Mr. Burton,' continued Mrs. Ricart smoothly, 'who came out in the same steamer with us.'

One of these penniless, nothing-to-live-on young people, you know, who really ought to be kept in a separate part of the ship, I think, and not allowed to mix among pretty, but foolish, young ladies.'

'Pity but the owners of the steamers had a hint, and kept a cage apart for them; it would, I am sure, cause quite a run on the ship of elderly chaperones and their charges,' remarked Cissy, with curling lip.

Mrs. Ricart smiled again; but though the eyes nearly disappeared in the little puffy cheeks, they did *not* twinkle merrily.

'And Mr. Burton, where is he now? In the district?' asked Mrs. Campbell, after a pause.

'No, lives in Calcutta, I believe, where he gets some few hundred rupees a month,' Mrs. Ricart replied spitefully. 'Can't live on a pittance like that there; will take fever and die, or go home soon, I should fancy. I hope he is not coming to the district to recruit, however—at least not to Cissy's neighbourhood.'

'I do not see what Cissy has to do with it,' replied the other sister pettishly.

'Ah, she might strike up the old flirtation, you know, and that spoils a girl's chances so, I always think,' Mrs. Ricart answered, with seeming carelessness.

'Flirtation! I trust Cissy is incapable of such a thing,' said her mother severely.

'I should certainly be ashamed of myself, were I guilty of it,' put in Cissy boldly.

'Yes, it is a most unladylike proceeding, and were I to imagine your encouragement of Captain Lambert meant nothing more, I should indeed be angry,' spoke Mrs. Campbell, as she glanced scarce lovingly at the girl.

Cissy's face flushed with vexa-

tion; she bit her lip, but did not answer, and the subject was dropped.

Meanwhile, vehicles of all descriptions followed one another round the bend of the river, and parties of riders came streaming across the ground, making the scene in a single hour as lively as it had before been desolate and deserted. Gradually then the gay throng drew to one spot near the side of the lake where a native band began to play, and where they congregated to gossip and enjoy the music. The turf stretch was again deserted, save where a rider careered alone across the turf perhaps, or a carriage, probably filled with natives, would sweep round the drive a while, and slip unnoticed away; only in this one spot was there life and laughter.

Near the carriage in which Cissy Campbell sat, a knot of gentlemen stood conversing.

'That Campbell girl is the prettiest of the new importations this year: don't you think so, Bryant?' asked one, Mr. Stevenson.

'I like that dreamy face of hers,' answered the man addressed. 'The most of the girls about here have so much nonsense and affectation about them. Miss Campbell's looks a genuine, steady, English face, and I always admire expression more than mere features.'

'There is an affectation that savours of high-flown nonsense too, you know,' said Mr. Stevenson, with a careless laugh. 'I confess I never can get much out of Miss Cissy; but my wife thinks of her as only a little below the angels. Burton, you came out with her, what did you think of her, eh?'

Graham Burton had been regarding Cissy as his companions

spoke. She was sitting with her face turned towards the sky, where the setting sun had left faint streaks of opal and amber, and a quiet sweet look rested on her face; the face was pale, the features delicate; but the lips were pale and firm, the eyes deep and gentle. His face softened as he looked at her, and after a moment's hesitation answered, 'I think she is what she looks, gentle and true, but shy and reserved; that old dragon, Mrs. Ricart, was so vigilant, however, one really could not get to know her well.'

'Ah, the aunt is a perfect Gorgon,' interrupted Mr. Stevenson. 'She brings out her lambs every second year to the slaughter; that is number three getting into the carriage: she looks more snake-like than ever in that clinging habit, and is a sneak like the rest, no doubt.'

'Looks it,' said another of the group. 'You bet mother Ricart sets her at Lambert.'

'Never a bit,' replied Stevenson. 'Miss Cissy is to get the chevalier Lambert. Mrs. Ricart daren't interfere; Mrs. Campbell is too much of a rich sister for that.'

'Well, perhaps not by fair means,' said the other, shrugging his shoulders carelessly; 'but I would not mind taking two to one that if Alice Ricart can catch Lambert, she will. The sides are not equal you see: it's mother and daughter against the other mother. Miss Campbell is evidently neutral, though maybe it is most telling; soft too of a girl, if she is indifferent, to let herself be disposed of so passively.' And the speaker moved off to another group, while Graham Burton looked rather savagely after him.

'Lambert is to stay the race-week with them,' added Steven-

son; 'it will be rather fun watching the game.'

'Will it?' said Graham to himself, as he sauntered off towards the lake, and gnawed his moustache with true English vigour.

In truth matters had gone further than Mrs. Ricart knew, or than one would have conjectured from the composed way in which Graham Burton had answered his friend. As he stood by the lake, his thoughts reverted to a moonlit night on board when he had stood by Cissy, had seen the trembling of her lip, heard the tremor of her voice, as they spoke of the morrow's parting; and almost persuaded himself, as he spoke of the determination and confidence he had that he would make his way quickly and see her again, that she would be true to their unwhispered love. For Graham Burton then was proud and poor, and would not let his feelings overcome his reason; and Graham Burton now, though proud still, had become suddenly and unexpectedly rich. To win the fruit he had before withheld himself from plucking, though it trembled within his grasp, was still his resolve; but to win it for himself alone. In the uncertainty of the present he half repented that he had let the favourable moment pass, half repented of the resolution which must place many difficulties in his way; but, smiling quietly to himself again, he muttered firmly to himself, 'No, no; if money is to do it, I had rather his bought her than mine.' Nevertheless his heart beat as he neared the carriage where Cissy Campbell sat; and as he pressed her hand, and stood by her in the fading light, something very like love gleamed in the eyes of both, and Graham was very happy as he watched the girl's sweet face flush and pale beneath his glance.

She introduced him to her mother, whose bow was the chilliest of the chill, and Mrs. Ricart's manner was no less freezing; yet he kept his stand in spite of the cold looks directed at him, and the officiously warm welcome accorded to Captain Lambert and others who came near.

The scene in which they formed a part was gay and busy. Among the carriages and vehicles gathered together, the horses prancing about, or standing meekly still, gay figures bent over to chat and flirt and gossip, or, like butterflies from flower to flower, flitted lightly from one group to another; while men went wandering up and down, now laughing here, now whispering there. The dark figures of syces in fancy liveries by the horses' heads, or ayahs in their picturesque garb carrying children about, lent strangeness to the scene; and above the merry laughter and hum of voices music swelled out ever and anon. Soon darkness crept over the scene, lamps began to twinkle, and now and again a carriage with its pair of glowing eyes would issue softly from the crowd, and wend its way smoothly over the turfy ground to the bend of the river; yet Graham Burton kept his stand.

'You will be at the ball this evening?' he asks, in a low voice.

'Of course, Mr. Burton. I wonder if it will be a nice one.'

'To me, yes, if you are there. Are you engaged for the first waltz?'

'Yes; I am so sorry.'

'The second?'

'Yes.'

'Gone too; then which may I have?'

'Shall we say the fourth? It is my first vacant dance.'

'An unlucky number; but never mind: you won't forget?'

'I shall be sure to remember,'

answered Cissy softly; and a few minutes later her companion had pressed her hand again, and sauntered off whistling gaily.

Captain Lambert took the vacant place at Cissy's elbow. The son of a wealthy proprietor in the district, with a good income at his own disposal, he had taken a trip out to India, to see the country, and give a look to his father's interests in passing. An insipid well-featured face, tall figure, and simpering manner were his chief characteristics; but, one of the most eligible *partis* of the neighbourhood, he had been made much of, and believed unhesitatingly in the superior merits which so many graciously attributed to him.

Graham Burton watched him for a moment.

'She does not care for *him*, anyhow,' he muttered confidently to himself, as, by the light of a passing lamp, he saw unquestionable indifference to the gallant Captain's power of making himself agreeable revealed on Cissy's face; and vaulting lightly on his horse, he took a sharp canter across the grass, then pulling up to an easy trot went, meditating, home.

'Ha, and what dance am I to be honoured with this auspicious evening?' Captain Lambert had asked, whilst caressing a carefully reared moustache.

'I think we are already engaged for the second waltz,' Cissy answered stiffly.

'O, yes; but you can afford more than one to *me*,' continued the Captain insinuatingly.

'Cissy will, I am sure, be delighted to dance as many as you like, Captain Lambert,' Mrs. Campbell remarked, smiling sweetly.

'Then the fourth, Miss Campbell, if *you* please.'

'Sorry I am engaged,' she said shortly.

'To whom?' asked her mother, frowning.

'To Mr. Burton,' replied the girl, colouring; disdaining, yet feeling much inclined, to evade the question.

'Mr. Burton can, I think, be easily disposed off. It is rather presuming in these young men to push themselves forward so early in the evening,' said Mrs. Campbell angrily.

'O, I should not dream of disappointing Mr. Burton. Burton—who is he? Haven't heard the name before. What a bore it must be to dance with these young apes! Yes, very presuming, shockingly so; but perhaps you'll give me the *fifth*, Miss Campbell?'

'Fifth waltz? Would you not prefer a square dance, Captain Lambert? My third quadrille is not filled up.'

'Third quadrille, O certainly; I am not engaged. May I have the pleasure?' And he tried to look sentimentally sweet, and succeeded in looking simply idiotic.

'I shall be most happy,' replied Cissy carelessly. 'Had we not better be going, mamma? I am wearying to get home,' she added.

Captain Lambert never dreamed of the words containing a hint, the idea would have been preposterous. Mrs. Campbell simply frowned.

'And what have you been busy with, Alice dear?' asked Mrs. Ricart, with a would-be tender smile. She had been sitting in solemn silence for some time, whilst Alice had been flirting vigorously over her side of the carriage, much to the disgust of Mrs. Campbell, who sat facing her. 'Are *your* dances all filled up also?'

'All excepting the fourth waltz for ever so far down,' answered

Alice, returning the affectionate glance—they kept these looks on view as tradesmen do their choice wares—of course she had heard no discussion about that waltz, she never did hear what was going on on one side whilst busy on another.

'The fourth waltz! Might I be honoured with it? I do not think you have favoured me with one single dance, Miss Ricart,' simpered the Captain.

'Not honoured *you*! Why, it was you who would not honour *me*, you cruel man!' answered Miss Ricart, with a lively arch look. 'I shall be most delighted; thank you very much. I know how to appreciate it, I can assure you; you are in such demand, I know;' and she cast a swift coquetish glance at him and turned away.

'So the despised dance has been disposed of after all,' cooed Mrs. Ricart. If they *did* wish to put Captain Lambert out of conceit with Cissy's manner, it could scarcely be detected, could it, under the garb of the affectionate aunt and cousin, who welcomed him for the dear girl's sake?

As they conversed, the throng of carriages had been gradually thinning, and but few were left as Cissy at last heard the welcome order given to return home. The driver gathered up his reins, the syces jumped to their perches behind, and with a sigh of relief she sank back among the cushions, as they bowled away softly over the turf towards the lamp-lit bazaars. Unconscious of the dark faces and strange sights with which she had already become familiar, she was borne through the lighted streets, the bazaars, so picturesque and weird when the glare of the sun is not there to show their filth and wretchedness, when the roads that have

been so dusty, so baking hot, are still moist and cool from their artificial shower. Away beyond to opener country the carriage glided, where the stars and the moon and the trees overshadowed them, among the camp and the bungalows dispersed all over the station, and full to overflowing for the next few days with those who meet and mingle and welcome one another for a short time, united by the common bond that they are strangers in a strange land.

And the turfy stretch they have left behind becomes once more desolate and bare; the last of the stragglers leaves it, the moon rises softly over it, the stars shimmer down into the lake, the light winds ripple the silvery surface of the waters. Save the sound of the whispering reeds, not a murmur is heard, not a trace of life is left, not an echo is heard of the merry voices that filled the air with laughter but a short while before.

The carriage which contained Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. Ricart, and their daughters turned finally into the compound of a large bungalow, where several tents, and a large semiana (or open tent, furnished like a room, but with no walls), were pitched. Here dusky figures with lights would be seen gliding about, and in the semiana several ladies and gentlemen were already seated, chatting and laughing, or refreshing themselves with cool drinks. Others followed in carriages or on horseback, guests who like themselves had been riding or driving on the course, and now discussed the neighbours they had met, or their own affairs, till it was time to dress for their late dinner, and the ball which was to take place that evening. By ones and twos they soon slipped away again, the gentlemen to the tents which had

been provided for their riding or sleeping accommodation, the ladies to the accommodation afforded by the bungalow.

Let us follow the two cousins as they retired to the room which they were to share together, where their native women already awaited them, and ball-dresses had been spread out on their beds ready. Cissy submitted herself at once to the hands of her ayah, Alice flitted about restlessly a while, and chatted unceasingly as she pulled out ribbons and flowers to try which would best suit her olive complexion; ever and anon caressing and fawning on her cousin, a proceeding she would still have persisted in had she even known how the recipient shrank from it. The two girls are a great contrast as we see them together by the bright light of the wall-lamps. Cissy is tall and calm and stately; Alice slight, short, and lively. The lips of the one are full, sweet, and firm; those of the other thin and tight, the short upper-lip continually parting over pearly white teeth. Neither has much colour, but Cissy's complexion is delicately tinted and pale, whilst Alice's is a clear olive, beneath which the crimson glows often warmly. The one wears her hair in golden-brown twists about the crown of her head, the other in an intricate mass of soft silky braids. Alice's eyes are sharp and near, glowing black eyes that sparkle bewitchingly and confuse one often; Cissy's, a soft violet blue, with a calm tranquil look in their depths. Both are beauties in their way.

'Ah, you are going to wear white to-night, Cissy; you always look so well in white; and these frosted flowers are beautiful. Now I need more colour; should I wear scarlet or maize flowers, do you think?' said Alice.

'Maize, to-night, with that black net; at least if you do not lose your colour, as you so often do,' answered her cousin. 'But you can easily change the flowers after dinner, if you do need something brighter.'

Now chatting quietly, now continuing silently, the two girls had almost completed their toilet when a knock was heard at the door. 'Come in!' they called.

A native woman, in her picturesque garb, lifted the curtain before the door, and entered. Gleaming black eyes and ivory teeth lit up the dark face, which glowed beneath the graceful white cheddar, which native women wear, as she salaamed profoundly to one cousin, then to the other.

'What is it, Mahajunia?' asked Alice. 'Does mamma want me?'

'The Maam Sahib sends her salaams to the Mus Baba, and wishes to speak to her,' answered the woman, in Hindostanee.

'All right; tell her I'll come,' replied Alice, in the same language; and taking the rest of her flowers, &c., in her hand, she stepped out by an open window into the verandah, and walking along nearly the whole length of the house, tapped at another window and entered her mother's room.

'What is it, mamma? Do you want your flowers fixed? These stupid native women can do nothing right,' she said.

'No, no, Alice dear,' answered Mrs. Ricart. 'The mail-letters have just come in from the factory, and there is one this week from your aunt Jane.'

'Ha, and what has she to say to it? Recommends scales and calisthenics, combined with as speedy and brilliant a marriage as circumstances will allow, I suppose.'

'Well, well, but my letter has something really important in it.'

'Indeed!'

'Yes; listen. Hem! Where is it?' muttered Mrs. Ricart, running her finger over several closely-written pages. 'Jane does write such a lot of twaddle, to be sure! Ah, here! "By the bye, did you meet a young fellow—Burton—on board? Mrs. Somerville has a lady from the country visiting her, who knows a lad of that name who went out to a situation in Calcutta by your steamer. He has just come in for a fine estate, and no end of money, from the grumpy old grand-uncle who sent him out, and with whom, it seems, he was a favourite, though he never guessed it. I don't suppose you would dream of cultivating his acquaintance on board; but we were just thinking what a grand chance it might have been for Alice and Cissy, and that you might encourage any opportunity of meeting him again. You can give my news this mail to Emily," &c.'

Mrs. Ricart had been lying luxuriously back in a low chair as she read; she folded her letter in silence. Alice's face had become more and more surprised; at the end she elevated her eyebrows, and whistled softly.

'Alice, I wish you would not do that; it is so unladylike,' said the mother reproachfully.

'Ah, bosh! But Burton will be a fine catch.'

'Yes; much better than Lambert.'

'Then I am to give up all idea of the one and try the other, eh? Is that the little game?'

'Don't speak so vulgarly, Alice. You understand that your aunt wishes Cissy to encourage Captain Lambert, and that Mr. Burton would be an excellent *parti*. You have your own way to make in the world, as your aunt and I had; and you know what a stupid choice I made (not but what your

father seemed well enough off at one time); and, on the contrary, you see what an excellent position your aunt enjoys, with plenty of money and as the wife of a judge. I should advise you to make yourself agreeable to Mr. Burton, and leave Cissy to the man her mother wishes her to marry.'

'And which she doesn't,' said Alice bluntly.

'Absurdity! She's very insipid, and won't care.'

'Still waters run deep, you know.'

'Fiddlesticks! Don't be sentimental. Do you mean to let the chance slip?'

'No, not I. I daresay you'll help me.'

'Of course, with pleasure; I am glad to see you so sensible. In the first place, you must make yourself look nice. You do look rather well to-night; but you want something brighter in your hair.'

'I should not object to your opal *aigrette*,' said Alice coolly.

'Well, then, you must take care of it;' and to Alice's astonishment the jewel was willingly produced and fastened in her hair, where the weird lights shimmered beautifully.

'Yes, you'll do,' said her mother approvingly. 'Is not that Cissy's voice in the drawing-room?'

'Yes; and the great Lambert is sure to join her. I suppose I need not go in, eh?'

'No,' said Mrs. Ricart, with answering smile. 'We will go in to Emily's room a little, and tell her some of Jane's news—only forget the letter. She can see it some other day, you know.'

Alice shrugged her shoulders callously, and followed her mother.

Meanwhile Cissy had glided into the drawing-room in a soft cloud of white, her eyes deep and

mellow, her cheeks glowing, and a glad tremor away deep down beneath the serene exterior. When the gallant Captain joined her and requested a song, in the little interval before dinner, she had poured the words out with full expression, glad to be free from talking to him, and to relieve the mutterings of her heart in music. Captain Lambert was still standing behind her with a simpering smile, congratulating himself on the rich voice and handsome figure of his future bride, when the guests began to flock in, all dressed for the evening's amusement.

CHAPTER II.

THE BALL.

LALSERIA, the residence of the Raj of Cuchuahigar, who permitted a part of his palace to be thrown open for the convenience of those who wished to get up dances in the station, was alive with life and light as Mrs. Campbell and her party entered. She swept into the ballroom on her husband's arm, who led Cissy, pure and white as a stately snowy lily, on the other.

A large room stretching across the end of the building, and surrounded on three sides by a verandah, was the chief apartment used on such occasions as the present. Bright candelabras blazing with light were suspended from a gorgeous arched roof, and mirrors and doors alternated all round the room. In the centre stood two large pillars, dividing the area into two equal parts; the nearer half was softly carpeted, and furnished luxuriously with low couches and chairs; but beyond the pillars, the floor was waxed and shining, unencumbered by

couch or other article of furniture which might impede the progress of the dancers. The verandah, to which doors led on all sides, was curtained in to the right and beyond, and used partly as a supper-room, partly for the musicians; but in front of the building it was free and open, and here *têtes-à-tête* and flirtations were carried on, and heated dancers retired for a breath of the cool night-air.

The first dance was almost over as Cissy arrived; but her partner soon appeared to claim her for what remained of it. Round the room she glided gracefully and calmly, but ever and anon the golden-brown lashes were lifted, and the violet eyes gazed quietly over her partner's shoulder, seeking for a face that would not be banished from her mind. At last a sweet smile of recognition parted her lips, and as a faint tinge of colour mounted to the snowy brow, Graham Burton's heart beat gladly, and the blood flowed swifter through his veins.

Mrs. Campbell and her sister were sitting side by side; Alice was busy dancing.

'There is that young fellow Burton, Emily,' said Mrs. Ricart. 'Do you know, I think you should be careful about dear Cissy, she has a decided liking for the young fellow. I did not say much on the course this evening, for you know open opposition only makes a girl more obstinate; but I am vexed to see that he should have followed her from Calcutta. I was quite anxious, I can assure you, on board.'

'What nonsense, Ann! Cissy would never be such a fool.'

'Hem! you think so; but you will see your mistake yet. You see she refused Captain Lambert the fourth waltz because of him.'

'Yes. I was so angry, I felt in-

clined to forbid her dancing with Mr. Burton at all.'

'That would be a mistake, dear; believe me she will think the more of him, if you oppose her.'

'But what can one do?' asked Mrs. Campbell peevishly.

'Ah, a great many things can be managed quite quietly, Emily; for instance, you who so often have fainting-fits might fancy yourself ill at the time she wanted to dance with him, and call her away.'

'Well, but she would only dance with him again.'

'Ah, but then supposing I took the trouble to make him believe that she avoided him purposely, and were to get Alice to flirt with him, and make Cissy jealous. Then if we could keep up the misunderstanding, the thing would soon be knocked on the head. Indeed, I would seem to encourage him to the house, and be kind to him; and the more Alice and he are together, the more Cissy is likely to encourage Captain Lambert.'

'But would Alice take the trouble?' asked Mrs. Campbell dubiously. 'And you yourself? I am such a poor hand at anything diplomatic; and Alice is fond of her own way.'

'Ah, Emily, you misjudge poor Alice,' answered Mrs. Ricart deprecatingly. 'She is devoted to dear Cissy, and I am sure it would be very little return on our part for all your kindness to us.'

'O, pray do not speak of that,' replied Mrs. Campbell languidly. 'I will leave the matter quite in your hands, then; don't forget to remind me at the right time.'

'That I will not,' responded Mrs. Ricart emphatically. 'Ah, here comes Captain Lambert.'

Captain Lambert sauntered up to Mrs. Campbell's side.

'Miss Cissy has been busy dancing, I see,' he remarked; 'but here she comes.'

'Yes, the next set is the Lancers. Are you going to dance?'

'No, I am not engaged for it.'

'And you, Cissy dear?' she asked, as the girl sat down by her side.

'I was; but Mr. Stevenson has not come: his wife says he was lazy,' replied Cissy.

'Then *do* sit down and rest, and don't fag yourself at the very beginning of the evening. There is room for you too, Captain Lambert; *pray* sit down.'

Mrs. Ricart had moved away to meet her daughter. Graham Burton came up.

'Mr. Stevenson deputed me to ask this dance of you, Miss Campbell. May I have the pleasure?' he asked.

'Cissy is not going to dance this time; she and Captain Lambert intend to have a rest,' said Mrs. Campbell quietly and decidedly.

'O, I am sorry for that,' said Burton coldly; and the tears rose in Cissy's eyes as he drew himself up and walked away.

'O, I say, Lambert,' called out a gentleman a few minutes later, 'do just take a partner for this set of Lancers; we only need one couple to complete the set, and I can get no one. *Do*, there's a good fellow!'

'Miss Campbell, would you not break your resolution?' simpered the Captain.

'O, do oblige us!' urged the stranger.

'No, thank you, Captain Lambert; I have just refused Mr. Burton.'

'Refused Mr. Burton! What does that matter?' said Mrs. Campbell. 'Dear me, Cissy, how very silly you are to make such a fuss, and keep people waiting! If you

are so particular, can you not explain it again? Go now, at once; don't make yourself conspicuous.'

Cissy's face flushed. 'I can explain it afterwards at our waltz,' she thought; and in the expediency of the moment she hesitated, faltered, and moved away.

Graham Burton stood near watching. He did not hear the words, but the result sufficed him. Indignation swelled in his heart against her, as he saw Cissy gliding through the dance; and he determined not to go near her till the waltz came round which she had promised him, and then to let her explain her conduct or not as it pleased her.

The dances slipped on one by one, and Cissy was ever on her feet. The gay throng swarmed about, and the snowy figure of the girl, with her calm still face and downcast eyes, passed in and out among the eddying, gliding, whirling crowd. Her heart was not at rest; she was longing for the fourth waltz, that she might explain all to Graham Burton, and that he might not glance so disdainfully and haughtily at her, but at length it drew near, and her heart beat fast as she was led to her seat for the last time before it.

'Cissy darling,' a voice murmured at her elbow, as she was nearing a seat. She started nervously, and glanced round.

'Yes, aunt,' she answered, a strange dread at her heart.

'Your mamma is not at all well, dear; she is wanting you. Mr. Moreton, would you be so kind as to take Miss Campbell out to the verandah, she will find her mother there. I will come immediately; but Alice has torn her dress, and wants me. Stay; are you engaged for this dance?'

'Yes, to Mr. Burton; would you kindly tell him?'

'O, I don't suppose it matters

much about him, does it? But I will, if I meet him; go, dear, now.'

With sinking heart Cissy went out to the verandah, where she found her mother reclining on a couch and fanning herself.

'What is it, mamma dear? Are you ill?' she asked, struggling between filial duty and her desire to see Graham Burton, and explain all to him.

'I am a little better now,' answered her mother, but she kept her by her side to fan her gently, and sprinkle eau-de-cologne on her face; and the girl's heart misgave her as the music began again, and Graham Burton did not appear to claim her or see if he could be of any use.

Meanwhile Mrs. Ricart joined Alice, and looking round the room they saw him, apparently looking for Cissy. They approached him.

'Do you know where Captain Lambert is?' asked Mrs. Ricart, as if in passing.

'I saw him but a minute ago; can I call him for you?'

'O, no, it does not matter; but Miss Campbell wanted him.'

'Miss Campbell—where is she then?'

'Out in the verandah,' answered Mrs. Ricart composedly. 'She is unfortunately engaged to some one she does not wish to dance with, and asked me to send him, if he was not engaged, as a consolation. Every one knows they are great friends, you know,' she added, simpering, as she tapped her fingers lightly with her fan. 'I daresay I shall find him.'

'I was engaged to Captain Lambert for this dance, though,' said Alice sweetly; 'but tell him not to mind me, mamma dear; I know he would prefer her.'

'Ah, but that is awkward,' replied Mrs. Ricart, with an amazed look; 'the Captain is so polite he

will not think of deserting you, though I know you would not mind it. Mr. Burton, are *you* engaged for this waltz?'

'I? No; at least my partner has not appeared.'

'Then would it be a great stretch of etiquette to ask you to take Alice for a round—just one turn, you know—that I may tell Captain Lambert not to mind about her?'

'I shall be most happy,' Burton answered, with a chilly smile. 'Miss Ricart, may I have the pleasure?'

'Too bad to force me on you like this,' Alice said, with a deprecating smile. 'I am sure mamma did not think of what she was doing; I am really ashamed of her coolness. It is so kind of you to take it so meekly.'

Graham only answered with another quiet smile, and offering her his arm, led her into the ball-room, where they were soon whirling round among the rest; Alice looking up into his face sweetly, telling him what a nice waltzer he was, whispering insipid nothings, as she smiled at the success of her mother's strategy, and wondered coolly how much money he had; passionlessly reviewing the advantages of being able to dress as one liked, and go to all the gaieties one had a mind for. She did not care that she was hurting her cousin; all she thought of was that she was determined to win; and if the truth were told, the difficulties in her way rather lent a zest to the undertaking. And in the heart so near her own a cold stern anger had sunk; he heeded not the bright face that strove to attract him; Alice's merry words were scarce understood, he hardly realised the weight of his disappointment yet, but looking up after awhile he saw Cissy and Captain Lambert joining the waltzers,

and the last spark of his faith in her died out, leaving nothing but angry and disappointed love—for the love he could not quench—in his heart towards her.

With quiet exultation Mrs. Ricart had seen her daughter and her partner move away, and then spying Captain Lambert had approached him.

‘Captain Lambert, may I ask a favour of you?’ she asked.

‘Certainly,’ was the reply.

‘Miss Campbell is in the verandah with her mother, who is ill. Would you be so very kind as to bring a little champagne?’

‘With pleasure; but I am engaged to Miss Ricart for this dance, and cannot find her. Would you be so kind as to explain?’

‘O, certainly; I told her I was going to ask you to get me something, and that she was to dance with some one else. See, she is dancing already.’

‘Ah, that is right; I will be with you immediately,’ and the Captain moved to the refreshment room as Mrs. Ricart went out to the verandah.

‘I saw Burton,’ she said lightly to Cissy, ‘and told him you had to come out; but he did not seem to mind, but said it would be easy dancing with you again, and asked Alice to dance. What you can see in him to admire, I can’t tell, Cissy; but if a young man presumed to speak so lightly and confidently of me, I should not be too well pleased. Captain Lambert, on the contrary, was most polite and anxious, and has gone for champagne for your mamma. Ah, here he comes. Emily dear, I hope you are better;’ and Mrs. Ricart took the fan from Cissy’s hand, and leant affectionately over her sister.

‘Much better, thank you. Ah, Captain Lambert, how good of you! This champagne will quite

revive me. Now I know you want Cissy for this dance, and my sister will stay with me; so please, Cissy dear, do not think of waiting.’

‘Captain Lambert and I are not engaged for this dance; but perhaps he has a partner elsewhere, and will take me back to the drawing-room,’ said Cissy wearily.

‘You are mistaken, Emily,’ Mrs. Ricart cooed softly. ‘Captain Lambert was engaged to Alice, and Cissy to Mr. Burton; but the missing partners have consoled themselves with one another, and I do not see that either of those remaining should lose their dance.’

‘No, indeed. Miss Campbell, let us have this waltz, do.’ He laid his hand on her arm, and Cissy shook it off; but her aunt whispered on the other side, ‘Yes, do, Cissy, and pay young Burton off for his rudeness;’ and her wounded feelings getting the better of her, she allowed herself to be led off, and once more entered the ballroom and danced with the Captain.

Calmly Cissy moved round in the waltz, hiding with quiet smile and joyless eyes the pain that would be ready to overwhelm her when once left to herself, and Burton watched her with a sneer.

‘Selling herself, by Jove! What a beastly place India must be for women!’ he thought. ‘Your cousin is surely much changed, Miss Ricart,’ he remarked, as they stood resting.

‘Do you think so too?’ said Alice, feigning surprise. ‘Well, to tell the truth,’ she continued confidentially, ‘I think so too. Cissy used to be such a romantic, disinterested kind of girl; I think she has been quite spoiled with admiration, and got rather afraid of her. India is not a nice place for women, filling them with such love of wealth and admiration. I used to be

thought very cool and calculating ; but really I see so much about me I have been thoroughly disgusted. I confess Cissy surprises me most of all : although Captain Lambert is infatuated with her, I am afraid she would soon throw him over, in spite of her encouragement of him, for any one wealthier. Now and again she seems more like herself ; but what I call her good fits come seldomer now.'

Graham and Cissy spoke no more to each other that evening, and in the ensuing days of the meet, though each longed sadly for the old intimacy and gladness in each other's presence, no opportunity of reconciliation offered itself, and Mrs. Ricart and Alice saw their stratagem succeed even beyond their anticipation. A cold calm bow was all that passed between the two ; and whilst Graham imagined she had slighted him intentionally, Cissy feared that Alice (by whose side he constantly was, by the contrivance of mother and daughter) had won his heart. She had not even the power of indulging her grief in the never-ceasing string of gaieties of an Indian race-meet. In the morning they drove to the races, where she would sit listlessly in an open barouche below the stand, with Captain Lambert at her elbow ; whilst Alice, in riding-skirt and coquettish little hat, was up and about among the gay throng on the stand, the liveliest of the elegant light-hearted ladies there, constituting Graham Burton her favoured slave. He must go and bring her coffee and cakes, it was so cold ; or perhaps run down and see why the horses were so long in coming out, or tell her the name of each horse and rider as they passed to the starting-place. Then, as the gallant beasts came streaming, striding along, she would cling to his arm in

childish excitement, to unfasten her small hands with a little apologetic smile and blush as the race was over, to look up with tender glistening eyes as the result was known and the music between the races swelled out again. Or they would comment—he with listlessness, she with animated face—on the people about them that they knew, she surprising him sometimes into a laugh at her wit, as they gazed on the picturesque crowds below, on the dusky eager faces clustering all round the race-course, with gorgeously clad wealthier natives interspersed among them ; and not seldom Alice's tongue would find something to comment upon that drew his attention to the calm white face below, a face which from its very look might have told him Alice's words were false, as its owner sat talking quietly, indifferently to the Captain. Cissy was too true-hearted to flirt with one man because another had wounded her ; she was longing for rest and peace ; but her mother forced her into all the gaieties of the time. If there were no races, a hunt or paper-chase would perhaps be organised, leaving the ladies no more than time to dress for breakfast and the callers who streamed in after, or for calls that had to be made.

The callers were received in the semiana ; and here Cissy sat wearily receiving them, day after day, Burton among the rest. Cricket, tiffins, and Badminton tournaments alternated in the afternoon ; after which all resorted to the course, where the band played, and gossip and flirtations thrived. It was dark ere the ladies returned, and even then Cissy could not rest, for Alice shared her room, and they had still to dress for the dinner-party, often for the ball, which dragged the day into the small hours of the morning.

Cissy's pale face became weary and sad-looking, and deep-blue lines settled, as the days crept on, beneath the patient joyless eyes.

CHAPTER III.

THE MASQUERADE.

THE last dance of the meet came at last, the fancy-ball. Alice and Cissy had retired to their room to prepare for it: the former sprightly, and more than usually gay, for her dress of scarlet and black and gold, as Esmeralda, was likely to suit her to perfection; but Cissy had not glanced at hers. Wearily she had thrown herself on a chair, and, leaning her cheek on her hand, bade her ayah wait a while.

'Are you not going to dress, Cissy dear? You are out of spirits, surely,' said Alice. 'Silly stupid thing!' thought she to herself. 'Well, I have as much right to Burton as she has: she's abominably cross.' The accusation was false; but Alice did not choose to reproach herself; she meant to have her way, she did not care much how; and tried to blame Cissy, in her heart, though she kept up a great semblance of affection for her outwardly.

'I do feel tired to-night; I wish I had not to go to the ball; I'm sick of the meet,' she said sadly.

'Dear me, Cissy, I wonder at you; but you always were sentimental at school; so much gaiety and waste of time goes against your conscience, I suppose, and makes you religiously melancholy. I was telling Graham Burton last night what a goody you used to be, and he laughed and said, "What rot!" Not very elegant; but really, I think, very appropriate. I do wish you would give it up; it makes you so ridiculous,

Cissy.' Miss Ricart had a happy knack of inserting what might be vulgarly called *a lie*—more politely speaking, *slight fabrication*—into her conversation at times, a habit she had in all probability acquired from her excellent mother. A low gleam shot from Cissy's eyes as she rose and proceeded to dress.

'I have enjoyed this meet immensely,' continued Alice. 'I shall be very sorry when it is over; but mamma says I may go down to Calcutta for a while, while my dresses are fresh.'

'To Calcutta! To whom?' asked Cissy.

'To the Tweedies; they asked me on board, you know, and I have kept up a correspondence with them.'

'Those vulgar people—I could not bear them!'

Alice shrugged her shoulders.

'They have lots of money, and go out a great deal,' she replied carelessly; and the cousins proceeded to dress in silence.

Cissy was to be Undine; her dress was of pale sea-green gauze, over a pale-green shot-silk skirt, and masses of seaweed were festooned here and there. She was to wear pearls as ornaments, and her berthe and band consisted of bright shells.

'Will you be long, Alice?' she asked at last.

'No; why?' said Alice, flitting about. The small brunette looked her best in the dress she had chosen, and was in good-humour.

'I have a bad headache. I thought I would wait till the room was quiet, and get my old woman to brush my hair well; it is to hang anyway.'

'Ah, I can go now,' responded Alice. 'I'll take the rest of my things to mamma's room, and she'll fix me up all right;' and bidding her servant bring what remained of her dress, she flitted

off through the verandah to her mother.

Cissy threw herself back in a low chair, and gave herself up to thought. 'What is the meaning of it all?' said she to herself. 'Alice would not marry him; then why does she run after him so? She cannot be taking so much trouble merely to thwart me; it would have been more like her to relieve me of Captain Lambert's attentions, and I had almost believed she would. Every one is talking of her; and it is she who is ridiculous, not I. I have tried to show Captain Lambert that I do not want him; but he will not see it, mamma fawns so abominably upon him. Anyway, I shall refuse him in the end; and after to-morrow surely I shall have a little peace. I fancy they are all working to keep Graham Burton and me apart; and had it not been that he seems to care for Alice, I would have spoken to him again and again, and told him that I offended him but accidentally. Ah, God help me, and make me more unselfish!' she murmured, as the tears fell over her cheeks, and a shiver passed through her. She thought of the moonlit nights on board, of the stolen glances, the tender low words at stray moments, which even the vigilance of her aunt could not prevent; of all this intercourse, from the first delicate distant attentions, to the last sad parting, when his lips were dumb; and though he would not say it, she knew he cared for her, and acknowledged the love lying hidden in her own heart. How she had hoped against hope that they should meet again! How sweet it would all have been, even had it passed into the region of dreams! But to meet again so soon, and he so changed and cold, and wooing Alice! Her heart sickened at the thought. 'Ah,

God, if he had only never come, if it had all died out and become distant and sweet!' she sighed, and laid her head wearily on her clasped hands, regardless of the ayah, who had unfastened the long golden hair and brushed it till it shone like silk.

Mrs. Campbell, gorgeous in a Queen Elizabethan costume, which suited her stately figure well, entered, and looked approvingly at Cissy, whose hair, on rising, fell waving and gleaming to her knees. She had arranged Cissy's dress, and determined that this, her chiefest beauty, should not pass unnoticed.

Smiling, as perhaps a statue might smile if suddenly endowed with motion, yet devoid of flesh and blood, she held out a note to Cissy.

'Here is something from Captain Lambert, Cissy dear,' she said. 'He has gone down to dine with the Stevensons.'

'Why?' asked Cissy, in a startled voice, gazing fearfully at the note.

'For two reasons, dear. He feared it might be awkward meeting at dinner, after writing to you; and because he thought you might like a little while to reflect. I said you would answer him at the ball. Of course, it will be a happy answer;' and the mother smiled again.

Cissy smiled faintly. She knew what the answer would be, but she meant to give it quietly, and not be bullied till after. Her mother did not dream of dissent, and continued:

'Besides that, his dress is at Mr. Stevenson's. Young Burton offered him his as a pattern, as he could not make up his mind what to wear; and as it suited him very well, he sent down a derzie to make one something like it, and is to dine and dress there.'

'Then we shall not see him till the ball?'

'No.'

Cissy's heart bounded at the temporary relief. In the excitement and stir she could dismiss him quietly; to-morrow, the general settling-up day, she and her mother would settle up too; and after that the station would be almost empty again, and she would at least have no more gadding about.

Whilst her mother fastened pearls and seaweed in the long silky tresses, she stood meekly still, pale, silent, and lovely; and when Mrs. Campbell, calmly satisfied, had taken her departure, she opened the note quietly and read it. A slight curl curved her lip.

'What a pity he can't spell properly!' she said, in a low voice; and holding the paper to the candle till it crisped and curled about her fingers, threw it on the stone flags round the edge of the room, and sailed out.

An hour or so later that same evening Graham Burton might have been seen, in a picturesque garb, supposed to represent that of Sir Walter Raleigh, pacing the verandah of Mr. Stevenson's house, with a lighted cigar in his mouth. Presently he drew near a pillar, and, leaning against it, pitched his cheroot among the flowers beneath, and folding his arms, soliloquised thus:

'What the deuce does it all mean? Can the Ricarts suspect that I have money? I declare the way that girl comes it is too strong; she overdoes it. And the way she runs her cousin down, too, is suspicious. Whatever Cissy means, *she* isn't happy, that's clear, for at the course to-night she looked simply ghost-like. I daresay Stevenson is correct about Miss Alice, though he might keep his warnings to himself, as far as

I'm concerned. If one did marry her, the mother would lead one a devil of a dance; but it would be no use proposing, for she would not marry what she supposed a penniless man. Yet can she possibly know I am not penniless? By gad, that would explain all; for, without flattery, I do believe the girl means marriage. The idea is absurd; she can't. Yet I can't fancy her, either, putting herself so much about as to spend the whole meet flirting, simply to keep her cousin from, as she supposes, throwing herself away on me. I don't know what the deuce to make of it.'

Mrs. Stevenson came out and spied him.

'Captain Lambert?'

'No; Graham Burton,' laughed that personage.

'Ah, you are dressed so much alike, and both one height and figure, I mistook you. What are you doing here alone, Graham?'

'Meditating, *ma cousine*.'

'On Miss Ricart? She will be lovely to-night. But I always thought you admired blondes, and Miss Alice is quite a brunette.'

'True, and a pretty one.'

'Yes, but I don't care for her expression. Excuse my frankness, but I always thought the cousin would have been nearer your taste; such a sweet ladylike girl. And Alice is just—just a little vulgar, you know. I half fancied that Cissy had a liking for you too; I'm quite disappointed in your choice, Graham. You met them both on board?'

'Yes.'

'And preferred Alice? Well, I could not have believed it. And Cissy is as good as she is beautiful too; one of those dreamy ideal girls—a little too much so. I believe she would not do anything against her conscience for worlds; and I think she would wait pa-

tiently and faithfully for a man who had his way to make, and spur him on, and be the making of him.'

'You think so?' said Graham quietly.

'I do, indeed. We have always been friendly and intimate, and I fancy I know her well. Our children are all so fond of her, they call her aunt Cissy. And when George was in Calcutta, and they were ill, she came and helped me nurse them. I was not strong at the time; and Andy would not take anything but from her, she is so good and gentle.'

'You don't seem to see much of her now?'

'No; not lately.'

'Too busy captivating Captain Lambert, eh?'

'Fiddlesticks! She won't have him.'

'No. Then why encourage the fellow so?'

'Encourage him? Not she; it's that aunt and mother of hers. They are such disagreeable ruling women, the whole station is in arms against them; and being the judge's wife, Mrs. Campbell of course holds great sway. She keeps so aloof with her party, making such cliques. It was never so before; we used to be so sociable, and now there is nothing but squabbling and cutting one another. Any one can see with half an eye, at any rate, that Cissy is quite weary of that detestable puppy Captain Lambert.'

'Perhaps she will be too conscientious to marry, excepting whom her mother bids her,' said Graham contemptuously.

'Not she; she has too much sense. I told her once she was too yielding; and she said it was only for the sake of peace, and where it made no material difference. "But if it did make a difference to any one?" I asked.

"Marrying some one you did not care for, for instance?" (Captain Lambert was just on the *tapis* then.) "I should never do that," she said quietly; "it would be wrong as well as disagreeable. Were it right I might, disagreeable or not; but I could not take false vows." So I know she will refuse him.'

'I believe he has proposed, anyway,' said Burton.

'Indeed?'

'Yes; he told me when we were dressing that he had left a note behind, which he doubted not would make a sweet heart flutter;' and Graham mimicked his tone. 'He asked me to congratulate him.'

'No! Conceited creature! And what did *you* say?'

'Chaffed him—asked him if he was quite sure the sweet heart would melt at his approach; if he was not afraid it might flutter in the wrong direction.'

'And he?'

'He only grinned, as if it were a capital joke. So preposterous, you know, ha, ha!'

Mrs. Stevenson laughed heartily.

'Take care and don't tell any one of it, Graham, he's sure to be so sold.'

'You believe it?'

'Indeed, I do; but I must be off;' and she left him.

Graham's lip curled.

'Credulity,' he muttered scornfully, and stalked into the house.

Lalseria was already ablaze with light, and the ballroom thronged with gaily-dressed people, as Graham Burton drove Captain Lambert within its gates. As they entered and separated a brilliant scene met their gaze.

What need to describe a fancy-ball, or calico one, as they usually are at these Indian race-meets—the little gay spurts that blaze up

for a week or ten days here and there over the country, to which young folks look forward with youthful health and spirits? Men and women, apparently of all climes and countries, talking one common language, are met together with one common object—to enjoy themselves. Here comes a stately queen, with flowing train and sparkling jewels, laughing and chaffing with a common policeman, on whose arm she hangs; an old woman, with many-coloured gown, mob-cap, and wizened face, glances merrily over her spectacles at a Chinese mandarin with whom she converses; Mary Queen of Scots flies round the room in the arms of an old Mohammedan, with long white robes and snowy flowing beard; and a mermaid, with long silvery tail, sweeps round in the arms of a solemn-looking monk. The strange effect of the masques, worn at will, lends bewilderment to the scene, and all are laughing merrily as they strive to recognise their friends.

In the far corner of the room sits a lady in Elizabethan costume. A stout party in black, supposed to represent a Spanish duenna, is on one side; a fair girl in long sea-green robes, with falling masses of gold-brown hair, on the other.

‘Ann, I wonder if Captain Lambert is here? do just ask,’ says Mrs. Campbell.

The lady in black moves off, and returns speedily.

‘That is he by the door, Emily, with the masque, dressed as Sir Walter Raleigh.’

‘Thanks. See, there comes the Tremaines; you will want to speak to them, I daresay; I am going to send him to Cissy.’

As the two ladies move away, the girl’s face blanches and her fingers twine nervously.

Mrs. Campbell goes up to the figure near the door which has been pointed out to her, and taps the chevalier on the arm. He bows.

‘Cissy is in the corner there, Captain Lambert, waiting for you; I shall leave you to have a chat together.’

Graham Burton’s heart beats rapidly as the lady who addresses him passes on to another acquaintance. For a moment he hesitates, then approaches Cissy. Cissy looks up with throbbing bosom, her senses too bewildered to notice him; and as her companion rests his hand on the couch on which she is seated, and in his agitation finds no words to say, she, anxious to end a painful interview as soon as possible, plunges at once into the subject.

‘Captain Lambert, I received your note,’ she says, in a low quavering voice, her nervous fingers twisting and destroying fan and gloves. ‘I have striven, since your attentions have been so marked, to show you that it was my mother, not I, who encouraged your addresses. But I have failed, and I have to beg of you that you will kindly discontinue them for the future, for they are not, and can never be, agreeable to me.’

The figure by her side stood strangely silent. Cissy broke the pause, which was becoming awkward, and continued with more composure:

‘I know quite well that people will say I have encouraged you; but, believe me, I strove to do so as little as possible. Let me be candid with you,’ she went on, more boldly. ‘I believe the thought of the world’s knowing that you have been refused will be a greater trial than not winning my love, for there has never been any question of real love between

us. I am anxious to spare you all the mortification I can ; and if it can in any way be a reparation for your having been misled by my friends, I should willingly let people think that it is I, not you, who have been disappointed. Only my mother knows of your proposal, and I asked her not to speak of it to-night, nor will she to-morrow ; and so we have but to let the matter rest. People have said I have encouraged you, let them also say it has been in vain ; and then I shall not feel that I have really hurt you, for you will find many to care for you, as I, in the way you wish, can never do.'

The tears trembled in Cissy's eyes as she looked up in Burton's face, and a look of bewilderment and fear followed as she saw the working of his mouth, and began to discover that it was not Captain Lambert.

'I beg your pardon, Miss Campbell ; your mother sent me, mistaking me for Captain Lambert. I have been very rude in not discovering myself sooner.'

Cissy's heart bounded recklessly, and she bent her head low, trembling in utter confusion.

'Do you know me?' asked Burton, stooping over her.

'Mr. Burton, I believe,' was the low answer.

'Cissy,' he asked, in agitation, 'surely we have been mistaken in one another? If I had written the note, should I have been answered so?—tell me.'

A low sob was the only answer, and standing between her and the room, Burton took her hand quietly, and placing it on his arm, led her out by the door behind them to the verandah. Mrs. Campbell, sitting at the other end of the room, smiled incessantly to her neighbour on the one side, as she saw Cissy and her lover on the other side pass into the verandah.

A voice at her elbow made her start.

'May I ask where Miss Campbell is?' simpered the gallant Captain.

'Captain Lambert!' she ejaculated aghast.

'Yes.'

He bowed idiotically.

'I—I thought I had sent you to Cissy some time ago.'

'I! No, I have just come in. I tore my cloak getting out of the buggy, and had to get a derzie to mend it.'

'Then who can I have sent?'

'Eh, then who can you have sent? Perhaps Burton ; we were dressed very much alike, and I have been mistaken for him several times. O, it does not matter ; don't distress yourself,' he added calmly, as Mrs. Campbell rose with a blank face.

'But it *does* matter! O, *do* come!' she said, in confusion ; and he followed her across the room and into the verandah.

There stood the guilty lovers side by side, all doubts cleared away for ever.

'Excuse me, Mrs. Campbell,' said Burton coolly. 'There has been some strange mistake. Miss Campbell and I were all but engaged on board, and I find that it is me she cares for after all, not Captain Lambert, though I am sorry for his disappointment.'

'Is that true, Miss Campbell?' asked the Captain, in a faint voice.

'Yes,' answered Cissy, biting her lips, 'quite true. I am sorry for any mistake that may have occurred.'

Captain Lambert's eyes gleamed on the two ; but not being able to make a better case of it he swore pithily, and marched off in indignation.

'Cissy, what is the meaning of this?' asked Mrs. Campbell, scarce able to speak with anger.

'Allow me to speak, Mrs. Campbell. Cissy and I care for one another; and if I have enough to keep her as she can be kept, and can arrange it with her father, I trust you will make no objections.'

'Enough to keep her! Yes, on potatoes and salt, doubtless.'

'You are mistaken. I have lately become the possessor of a good estate, and about three thousand a year; it is that, not potatoes and salt, I ask her to share.'

'What?' almost screamed Mrs. Campbell.

Graham repeated his statement quietly, adding,

'Now if you will allow me to see you into the drawing-room, I will come back and finish my chat with your daughter;' and taking her hand he drew it into his arm, and led her perfectly passive to the window of the drawing-room, where he left her standing staring in bewilderment, till gradually she came to her senses again.

So he returned to Cissy, and the two were very happy; and though many mistook Captain Lambert for Mr. Burton that night, Cissy never did. Nor did the coolness of aunt and cousin, the gradual thawing and eventual cordiality of Mrs. Campbell, detract from, or add much to, their happiness.

Some months after, Mr. and Mrs. Graham Burton were dining out in London; and as they drove home, Cissy nestled to her hus-

band's side. 'Graham, I have been having mysteries solved this evening,' she said.

'What mysteries, Cissy?'

'Aunt Jane came up to me soon after dinner, and said, "I am so glad to see you so happily married, Cissy; and I flatter myself I had a finger in that pie."''

'How?' asked Graham Burton.

'I asked her how,' answered Cissy, 'and she said: "I fancy it was that letter I wrote your aunt Ann which made you encourage Mr. Burton." "What letter?" I asked. "Why, how forgetful you are, Cissy!" she said, quite crossly: "I wrote telling her that you or Alice should encourage Mr. Burton, as he had had a large fortune left him;" and she sailed away, leaving me quite shut up with astonishment.'

Graham relieved his feelings by a long low whistle.

'And so Mrs. Ricart kept all quiet, made you and I quarrel, and set Alice at me. What a vile woman! Why, Cissy darling, she might have separated us;' and he drew his wife closer to his side, and looked down tenderly in her face.

'Has that only occurred to you now?' she asked, with a merry laugh.

'All very well to laugh, Cis; but she might have done it; she nearly did; and then—'

'And then, darling? Well, you know she *didn't*; that was the beauty of it,' answered Cissy Burton, with wonderful serenity.

DANCING SHADOWS.

'Come like shadows, so depart.'

DANCING shadows, shadows dancing,
Flitting o'er my chamber-wall ;
Shadows from the sunlight glancing
Through the branches—branches waving,
Proud like victors, tempests braving—
Of the trees before the hall.

All the poets sing of evening—
Hour of softness, hour of love—
Vaguely to our minds revealing
Thoughts of glorious worlds above.

Fitful fancies, fancies airy,
Spirits of the eventide ;
Waking dreams, like visions fairy,
In the softening twilight glide.

As I muse, and watch departing
Fading beams of parting day,
Sudden tears—why are they starting ?
Thus our joys soon pass away.

Human hearts have secret places,
Chambers, where the shadows fall ;
Stern forms than sunlight traces
Dark 'handwritings on the wall.'

Oft within those hidden dwellings
Lightnings flash and thunders roll ;
Passions like an ocean's swellings,
Tempests that becloud the soul.

Dancing shadows, shadows dancing,
Till the last strange forms depart ;
Thoughts as strange, and yet entrancing,
Pass like shadows o'er my heart.

S. F. W.

CLUB CAMEOS.

Finance.

THEORIES are like men, they may be crushed by scorn or ridicule ; yet if they decline to be crushed they will end by being listened to, and by gaining followers. Looking over a file of old newspapers, and reading them by the light of some of 'H. B.'s' caricatures, I could not help comparing the present with the past, and reflecting how very different was the treatment which one peculiar theory met with in days bygone from what it now receives. Most of us can remember when the opinions concerning the 'Asian mystery' were first promulgated. We were told that mankind, instead of holding the Hebrew race in profound contempt, should reverence it for the important part it played in the history of the world. Without the Hebrew race, it was said, the records of Holy Writ would have been hopelessly lost ; without the Hebrew race the creed of Christianity would never have been founded ; without the Hebrew race the scheme of man's redemption could never have been accomplished. The Jews were both the favoured and the ostracised of the Supreme Being ; to their disloyalty as well as to their loyalty the world owed a deep debt of devotion.

We were told that the existence of the Hebrew race was a proof of its superiority over the other families of mankind. It had encountered the bitterest of persecutions ; it had been dispersed ; it had been oppressed by the harshest of laws ; all over the globe it

had met with cruelty, contempt, and infamous restrictions. Yet it lived, whilst the nations which had maltreated it had declined and had fallen, never to rise again. Not only did it live, but we were informed that, in spite of the awful past, the intellectual vitality of the Hebrew race was as vivid, as powerful, and as commanding as ever. Remove the shackles that fettered the Jew, admit him into the arena of life unhandicapped by the restrictions of intolerance, accord him all the civil rights of a subject, and speedily, it was alleged, he would work his way to the front, and stand a full head and shoulders above the rest of the crowd. From this fact it was argued we ought to learn a great ethnological truth—that a superior race cannot be absorbed or repressed by one that is inferior. Other races had existed as pure in their lineage as the Jew, but what had been their fate ? Either they had been absorbed by their victors in intermarriage, or they had become extinct from the deadly thralldom of conquest. Save the Jew, there was not an instance in the world of a race, whilst subject for centuries to every evil influence that prejudice and persecution could suggest, having maintained both its purity of blood and its intellectual vitality. From this we were bidden to mark not only the fulfilment of prophecy, but the superiority of the Jew.

We can remember the wit and humour that were directed against this theory and against its apostle.

Yet the laugh has not been exactly on our side. The apostle has proved the truth of his teaching in his own person, by a success which has never before fallen to the lot of a statesman in this country, whilst his theory is on all sides being most fully exemplified. Everywhere the Jew confronts his fellow-man,

and stands forth as master of the situation. Admitted but yesterday to the bar, he is in the first rank of counsel, second to none in eloquence, in the lore of jurisprudence, and in the skill of the consummate advocate. The realms of finance have always been his especial dominion, but never has he occupied so powerful a position

as at the present day; he holds empires in pawn, and by a wish to realise his possessions could reduce half a continent to bankruptcy. His civil disabilities removed, he becomes a legislator distinguished by his ready gift of debate, or a magistrate conspicuous for his tact and common sense. Music and song and the drama have been so eminently the monopoly of the Hebrew race, that

no one is surprised at a great composer, or a great actress, or a *prima donna* being of Jewish descent. In art, in science, in literature, the Hebrew is again among the most gifted in his profession. Whatever department is open to him, his success in it is so remarkable as to make him one of the conspicuous. When the field of his intellect was limited to medicine and finance, he rose till he could

rise no higher ; and now that the world closes none of its avenues at his approach, the talents which made him attain distinction when under persecution render every career he selects in this age of his toleration a brilliant one.

The Hebrew has all the qualities which lead men to prosperity. A keen brain, intense perseverance, great industry, great nervous energy, frugality, an ambition that never loses an opportunity, a conscience somewhat dulled by that cunning which is hereditary in the persecuted, pushing, active, knowing instinctively what to accept and what to reject,—it is not surprising that his success is marked. Between the Jew and the Scotchman—though both cordially dislike each other—there is much in common. Both comprise within themselves all that is good and bad in human nature in a marked degree ; both clan together, seldom working singly, so that the success of one brings other successes in its wake ; both carry their nationality in their face ; both are eager after the main chance, and somewhat indifferent as to the means, provided the end be gained ; both are frugal and persevering ; both are imbued with strong religious prejudices—and both sold their king.

It is in society that the position of the Jew has become the most conspicuous. Men now not elderly can remember the time when the Jew was never met with at the houses of the great. He lived apart, formed a community of his own, and was regarded as a pariah outside the pale of social existence. A dame of fashion would have felt her self-respect wounded had she permitted a Jewess to enter her drawing-rooms, whilst a peer would as soon have asked a Jew to his country house as he would the

hangman. But as wealth became more and more the idol of the age, as one by one the barriers set up by prejudice were uprooted, and as Judaism, gradually losing its distinctive characteristics, developed into a kind of deism, society had to march with the times and extend its frontiers. The Jew was admitted, and his tact soon transformed the bare inch which was reluctantly doled out to him into the lengthiest of ells. It is a curious fact that whilst the middle classes still entertain a strong prejudice against the Jew, nowhere is he more cordially welcomed than amongst what are termed the higher classes. Whether this is due to the fact that the more rarefied the social atmosphere the freer is it from the vulgarities of intolerance and the artificialities of civilisation, or that Hebrews, themselves strongly tinged with aristocratic sentiments, take more pains to please when in the society of the great than when amongst their equals, I know not.

There is one member of the Caravanserai to whom not a few of these remarks refer. It is now many years since Hermann Wertheim left his native city of Magdeburg to seek his fortune and build up a prosperous career for himself. Obscure, penniless, unbefriended, he began life dependent entirely upon his own resources. What the history of his lineage was none of us know, though, since he has attained to celebrity, malice and imagination have been busy with his name. Yet whatever his parentage may have been, there can be no doubt as to his Hebrew origin. There are various types of Jew. There is the low-caste Jew—bullet-headed, bull-necked, olive-hued, snub-nosed, with low brow, greasy curls, negro lips, and redeemed

alone from the most forbidding ugliness by the splendid eyes of his tribe. There is the Jew in the humbler walks of trade, short, fat, and differing little from the physiognomy of the ordinary Frenchman save in the hook of the nose and the peculiar shape of the eye. There is the Jew whose wealth has raised him for

generations above the common herd of his fellows—who is the aristocrat of his race—whose features are finely cut; the forehead broad yet lofty; the nose aquiline, and only when past middle age developing into the Judaic curve; the mouth, though too full, yet beautifully shaped; the chin firm and decided; the shape of the

head, the ears, the hands, the feet, all showing unmistakable signs of breeding. There is the dark Jew and the fair Jew, the red-headed Jew and the bald-headed Jew, the little dumpy Jew and the tall slim Jew, the Jew bearded like the pard, the Jew shaved like a priest; yet different as are these various types of Israelite in the cast of countenance, and above all in the melancholy expression

of the eyes, the observer has seldom any difficulty in deciphering the nationality. Wertheim is a dark man with black curly locks, large brown eyes, an aquiline nose, and a long well-kept beard; he might pass for an Italian, were it not for that peculiarity of expression which stamps him at a glance as a Jew. By the women he is considered very handsome; the men say he would be

good-looking were he not a Jew.

The career of Wertheim is a curious one. Whilst a lad at Magdeburg he read an advertisement in an English journal stating that a firm of merchants were in want of a clerk. He thought the opportunity a good one for perfecting himself in the English language, and ap-

plied for the post. He was successful, and engaged at the modest salary of forty pounds a year. At the end of three years he rose to the position of correspondence clerk. Here his knowledge of foreign languages, his shrewdness, his business capacity, his tact and foresight, caused him to be regarded as one of the most

useful of officials. He was sent over to Rio Janeiro as a junior partner to manage the fortunes of the Brazilian branch of the firm. Before he was forty he had succeeded—thanks to the busy hand of death—in becoming senior partner, and then retired from the business, demanding as his share some two hundred thousand pounds.

With this sum Wertheim speculated largely in the United States

during a season of great commercial depression, and well nigh doubled his fortune. He now came to London, took splendid offices in the City, and soon established a reputation as one of the happiest of financial promoters. He touched nothing which did not dissolve itself into gold. Every company he brought out was a success, and paid handsome dividends. His name as

chairman or director of a mine, a line of railway, a joint-stock bank, or any other financial association, inspired the public with confidence and sent up the price of its shares. His terms were heavy, yet speculators were only too glad to pay what he asked, provided he would promote the companies they proposed to him.

When it was known that Wertheim had consented to bring out a company, the competition for allotments set in fast and furious, and the shares once floated were bought up at a heavy premium. His offices were always crowded with eager capitalists anxious for an interview—not always granted—with the great man, imploring him to take their money and invest it in any undertaking he thought best. At first the great City houses looked somewhat askance at the ‘adventurer,’ as he was called; but they ended, as the rest of the fraternity had ended, by hanging about his magnificent anterooms and invoking his aid. It is better to be born lucky than rich, says the proverb; but when a man is both lucky and rich the ball lies at his feet. Wertheim was lucky. Numerous as had been the enterprises in which he had been engaged, none had been miserable failures, none had led to investigations which reflected upon his honour. Some were paying twenty per cent, some were only paying four, but there was not one of them at a discount. The official liquidator had never had occasion to intrude himself unpleasantly upon the presence of Hermann Wertheim. It was computed that within ten years he had realised nearly a couple of millions.

And now the self-control and sagacity of the man appeared. At the very zenith of his prosperity, when he was worshipped in the streets and

lanes around the Exchange, when every continental Bourse was applauding his ventures and exaggerating his successes, when committees of the House of Commons listened to his opinions as conclusive, when he was looked up to both by the Treasury and the Bank of England as the soundest of financial advisers, Wertheim sold his offices in the City and retired from every undertaking in which his name appeared. Jews are, of all people, the most pleasure-loving and the least given to *ennui* or satiety. They drink the cup of life to the dregs, and find the last quaff almost as pleasant as the first. Wertheim had worked and won; he would give ill-luck no opportunity; the rest of his days he would pass in leisure.

A brilliant position east of Temple Bar signifies at the present day a brilliant position west of that now happily removed obstacle. Gradually, first through dandies and politicians who had sat with him at the same Boards of Directors, then through Ministers who had asked him for counsel, and then through certain great ladies of a speculative temperament, who had been indebted to the famous promoter for allotments, shares, and early information as to railway amalgamations, Wertheim entered society, and his wealth soon made him a personage in the circles of its leaders. It is difficult to understand how a race, ostracised and oppressed like the Jews, should have obtained that social tact and power of pleasing, when it suits them, which is eminently their characteristic. There is hardly a capital in Europe, where a Jewess by her brilliant social gifts is not amongst the leaders of its society; and the Jew, whether he be one by religion or by blood, who has mixed much in the world, is always a

witty and amusing companion. It is only when among his equals or inferiors that the egotism, the selfishness, and the lack of scruple of the Hebrew appear.

Hermann Wertheim was not only admitted into good society; he was soon courted by it. The women considered him handsome; his manners had much of the repose

and dignity of the Oriental; his conversation was always amusing and could be instructive; whilst his wealth gave him that assurance and self-respect which other men obtain from high birth and acknowledged position. He bought a beautiful property in the favourite home county of his race, and one of the best town houses that

the agents had on their books. He was unmarried, and such a *parti* was not likely to be permitted to remain for long unattached. Whatever creed Wertheim inwardly professed, he was to all intents and purposes a Christian. In the country he was a model squire, and from his large curtained pew in the village church repeated the responses in a most edifying manner. In town he

could be seen every Sunday morning in the fashionable fane of his quarter. He had a few livings in his gift, and was most orthodox in the exercise of his patronage. He took a great interest in the future of the English Church, and spoke once or twice on the subject at Congress meetings. Whether he was ever baptised no one inquired; he was for all practical purposes as much a Christian as half the

inhabitants of the kingdom, and to look deeper would have been both impertinent and inquisitive. Still the Jews are an adaptive people, and in posing as a good Protestant Hermann Wertheim may after all be but an outsider in the fold. Wandering up Edgware-road one fine September morning, I entered the splendid synagogue of that district. It was the Day of Atonement. Gazing at the sad sallow countenances of the worshippers, it struck me that I saw the great ex-financier in their midst. As our eyes met he buried his face in his *talith*. Perhaps after all I was mistaken—one Jew is so very like another.

It took few of us by surprise when Wertheim married Lady Delia St. Julien. Everybody knew that the Earl of Leoville was as poor as poor could be, and that his clever wife had devoted the best part of two seasons to ensnare the capitalist. The match has proved a happy one for both parties. The mortgages on Medoc Castle and Romanee Park have been paid off, and the Countess has taken her diamonds out of pawn—I mean has received them back from her banker. Lady Delia—a dame of some five-and-thirty, very cold, very haughty, very distant, and who would have married Beelzebub, had she been assured of the extent of his rent-roll, to benefit her family—has come to the conclusion that she is a most fortunate woman. Domesticity has always been a marked feature in the Jewish race, and Wertheim is no exception to the rest of his tribe. Fond of his wife, passionately attached to their only child, he has succeeded in transforming Lady Delia from a statue into a most agreeable and charming woman. Thanks to the wealth and generous disposition of her husband, she

has made her house one of the most popular in town. In the country their hospitalities are conducted in the most lavish manner. The house is seldom free from visitors ; and as Wertheim is himself a splendid musician and somewhat of an artist, one meets there not only the fashionable, but the celebrities of the drama, the studio, and the library.

Considering that Hermann Wertheim is a man much sought after, he is a frequent visitor at the Caravanserai. He has many friends, especially amongst the young and the hard-working who have not yet attained to fame. At his dinners and Lady Delia's balls the youth of the Caravanserai show up in great force, whilst he places his stable and his shootings almost too much at their disposal. He has his enemies ; but when they have called him 'a German Jew,' and sneered at him as an 'adventurer,' they have little more to say against him. Besides, he has been forced so frequently to meet these two charges during his life that their venom has long ceased to wound : he has found the antidote in wealth and success.

One regret he certainly experiences. Imbued with a sincere admiration for the institutions and the people of England, a naturalised subject himself of her Majesty, and well read in political history, he would give much of his bullion to be able to enter the House of Commons. Those green benches have an attraction for him which the promoting of companies or the bringing out of loans never possessed. When an important debate takes place he may generally be seen sitting behind a friendly member under the gallery. How slight is the barrier that divides him from the House ! yet by him it can never be o'erpassed. As I see him watching speaker after

speaker, the mere routine of the business of the House having a special interest for him, the desire of his heart can be read. He is another instance of a man not completely happy. He has wealth, he has talents, he has health, he has a delightful home; yet the one thing he yearns after he has not (had he it, would he yearn after

it?)—the power to take an active part in the legislative labours of the nation of his adoption. Among those who have gained much, yet who still long after the unattainable, the name of Hermann Wertheim must also be written.

'We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest.'

A CONFESSION BY A 'BUTTERFLY.'

Apropos of Lectures in 'the Season.'

A LITTLE snatch here, and a handful there—
Such is the knowledge that most I crave;
A little dip here, and a less one there—
My mind like a bird o'er the ocean-wave.

The ocean is deep, and I fear to dive;
But the wave's bright spray has a rosy flight.
Beyond its brink I should fear to strive;
But my mind shall dance with its pearls of light.

At night music has a mysterious sound,
Sweet as though floating through magical air;
And knowledge half-known I have often found
Delightful as summer-night, balmy and fair.

The mind of man is a depth profound;
Should *I* try sinking a shaft therein?
Nay, rather I'll seek on the level ground
Such treasures, though small, as I there may win.

Ah, curl your lips, and look scornful who will,
With stores of learning now making so bold;
With good pennypieces I've filled *my* till,
While you, have you yet raked up one piece of gold?

I leave you the flowers of tropical climes;
The heather and clover enough for me.
You may study the comets that pass sometimes;
The sun and the moon *I* can *always* see.

Red is the rose, and the violet blue,
 Both sweet. That's as much as I care to know.
You may stain your fingers a grubby hue,
 To see what their roots are like, down below !

I've learnt that our sun is but one of a set,
 That tides have a something to do with the moon ;
 That the back of a duck is proof against wet,
 And that the French 'Liun' gives us the word 'Loon.'

But how many suns there are, more or less,
 Or how the moon sucks up the waters on shore ;
 Or from what source the duck gets a waterproof dress,
 Are some of the myst'ries I never explore.

I've learnt that the monkeys evolve into men—
 My knowledge stops short with the tip of their tail ;
 The how and all that, the wherefore and when,
 I care for no more than a tenpenny nail.

I like to see Frankland show nations in drops ;
 But what are the races, and how they all grow,
 And where water's power to nourish them stops,
 Are parts of the knowledge I care not to know.

I like to hear Max Müller earnestly tell
 That signs of the Roman Church came from the East ;
 But when he gives deeper instruction as well,
 I shut up my ears from the rest of that 'feast.'

'Tis nice to see Tyndall make wires red-hot,
 To see him get sparks from the end of a rod ;
 But when he tells *how*, then I'm deaf as a shot,
 And 'sound-waves' sound dimly in lands of Nid-nod.

'Tis pleasant to know that King Alfred burnt cakes ;
 That Plutarch wrote *Lives*, and Mrs. Jameson of *Saints* ;
 That England and Italy both have fine lakes ;
 And Millais and Raphael both have used paints.

'Tis as well to know, also, that boilers can burst,
 And ice is more safe when it cracks ; and what's more,
 That sucking dry bread will alleviate thirst ;
 And that solemnly staring will silence a bore.

'Tis nice to know everything just 'on the line ;'
 The names, you know, ologies, isms, and all.
 Enough just to talk and to feel oneself fine ;
You may try to know more—if *I* try, I shall fall.

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER XXIX.

A NEW GUARDIAN.

MABEL was almost afraid to be happy, though the peace and quiet and safety of that evening and the next day were something that her sad little life had never yet known. No morbid fancies could live in the same house with Mrs. Strange; they never did; and therefore she was not surprised to find that her young visitor could smile like other girls, talk intelligently, and enjoy all the pretty things about her, after she had been an hour or two in the house. Mabel's only drawback was that Dick had not appeared. Every time the gate opened, and a step came up to the door or crossed the hall, she was seized with such a fit of anxious nervousness that she could hardly sit still in her chair. Sometimes it was half terror, for how little she knew of Dick! then, again, it was wild delightful romance—that it should be he, after all, who had taken care of her on the journey, and who had then appeared to her a perfect hero. Her companions saw very well what she was thinking of, but said nothing, leaving Dick to manage his affairs himself. Only both Mrs. Strange and Miss Northcote felt their hearts warm towards the poor child, who had suffered so much—how much, they little knew—and who looked at them with a dawn of happy confidence in her wistful eyes. Between tea and dinner—a bright lovely evening,

not far from sunset—Anthony was going out into the village, and met Dick at the gate.

'Is she come?' said Dick eagerly.

'Yes. Go in and see her,' said Anthony.

'I thought you could get her out of prison, if anybody could. But what's the use of my going in?' said Dick, dropping into despondency. 'I suppose, of course, you haven't found out anything about that other fellow?'

Anthony smiled.

'Do you think I do things by halves?' he said. 'Go in, Dick. Say what you please to her. You will find her free.'

'But what do you mean?'

'I mean—that it was a mistake,' said Anthony.

He hurried off, on his way to some of his poor people. Dick stared after him for a moment. Anthony was certainly mad to talk in such riddles as this. How could it be a mistake, when Mabel had told him herself, the night before last?

'Well, I had better find out from herself,' Dick decided; and having made up his mind to this wise course, he went to the door.

It so happened that Mrs. Strange had just left the drawing-room, and, looking out at one of the hall-windows, had seen him and Anthony stopping at the gate. She immediately stepped back to the drawing-room door, and called Kate.

'Go into the library, my dear,'

she said. 'Here's Dick, and you and I are better out of the way.'

Kate obeyed, and Mrs. Strange went forward to open the door for Dick. He looked very well, she thought; he was better dressed than usual, and looked smoother and more civilised; she thought him a remarkably good-looking man.

'Here you are, Dick,' she said. 'We have been expecting you all day. Now you may go into the drawing-room, if you like. But one word, please. This is not a case of flirting. Because that poor child has suffered quite enough.'

She spoke very gravely. Dick coloured, and his face was full of feeling as he answered, 'She shall always be happy now, Mrs. Strange, if it depends on me.'

Perhaps the old Carweston drawing-room had never looked more delightful than it did that evening; the western sun came shining in on all the curiosities, catching bright colours and bits of gilding, throwing lovely cross-lights on the stately old group of musical instruments, above which those two Italian pictures, the gems of the collection, were now in shadow. The old clock in the corner, lit up by its own ray of sunshine, said half-past five; the Dresden and Chelsea figures, with their heads on one side, looked placidly at Dick; but there was no sympathy between them and him. He looked at nothing but the girl in the window, who got up and came to meet him, rosy and smiling, a different creature from the sad little maiden he had comforted in the starlight, forty-eight hours before.

After the first few words, these two people sat down on the sofa, and talked about their past. Dick talked, at least; he asked Mabel a great many things, to

which she gave shy little signs of assent. From this retrospect it appeared that they had always liked each other better than anybody else.

'But I daresay you have heard lots of things against me. In fact I know you have,' said Dick. 'Didn't you hear that I flirted with Flora Lancaster?'

'Yes; but it was not you. It was Randal.'

'Randal behaved to her like the brute he is,' said Dick. 'But I, you know, I admired her very much. In fact—'

Dick paused; somehow farther confessions did not seem necessary just then.

'I don't wonder at that, for I admire her too,' said Mabel. 'She is one of the sweetest and kindest and prettiest people I ever knew.'

'You generous darling!' said Dick.

Mabel hardly understood why she was generous, but neither she nor Dick cared to spend their time just then in talking any more about Flora. Every moment it was more possible, more delightful to talk to Dick, to tell him how unhappy she had been, how happy she was now. Dick seemed to be strength and affection combined; she had reached a safe haven at last, this tired little voyager. Dick quite realised his position, and thought that life could never have been worth living without Mabel to take care of.

'Mabel, do you mind telling me,' said Dick, after some time, 'what you meant the other night, when you said you were going to be married? Just now, when I asked you if it was all right, you said yes. How has it got right so soon?'

'O, I don't think I can tell you,' said Mabel.

'Very well; never mind, dear. Only I did rather want to know,' said Dick gently. 'I might meet him without knowing it, and say something fearfully wrong.'

'Can't you guess?' said Mabel, in a very low voice.

'Why, you said it was not Randal, and I don't know who else has been at Pensand. Some friend of his? Somebody rather vile, or you wouldn't have hated the notion so much.'

'Vile! The very best person in the world!'

'By Jove, I'm getting jealous. Nonsense—it can't be! Was it Anthony Strange?'

Dick's voice sank to an awe-struck whisper. Mabel managed to convey to him, without speaking, that he was right, and for a moment or two he was silent, thinking it all over, and beginning to understand Anthony a little. Many men, certainly Randal Hawke, would have liked this Don Quixote none the better for putting them under such an obligation, would have very heartily called him a fool, and almost wished themselves clear of the whole affair. But Dick had a touch of unworldliness, and admired a hero when he saw him. He was half inclined to laugh, but he was deeply touched too.

'That old fellow must be too good for this world,' he said. 'He's a sort of hero. He would jump into the Mora for the benefit of Carweston. Of course he would, if he has done this for me.'

'For me too,' said Mabel.

'Why on earth did he leave you so long at that place?' demanded Dick.

'Don't ask me any more questions about it, please,' said Mabel.

After all, Anthony was not the first interest to either of them just then; this was human nature, and not ingratitude or selfishness.

Mrs. Strange left them alone as long as she could, and only came into the drawing-room when it was time to dress for dinner.

'Mrs. Strange, do you know that she belongs to me?' said Dick, getting up and leading Mabel forward.

'I suspected as much, Dick,' said Mrs. Strange. 'But have you considered, either of you, what will General Hawke say?'

She put her arm round Mabel and kissed her very kindly.

'O, we shall manage him,' said Dick. 'We don't live in the days of tyrants.'

After the ladies were gone, Dick waited in the drawing-room till he heard Anthony come in. Then he went out into the hall, feeling very awkward, and consequently rather cross. But Anthony looked at him with a bright smile.

'Well?' he said.

'It's all right,' said Dick. 'But I didn't know before that I was to thank *you*.'

He wrung Anthony's hand with the rough grasp of a colonist.

'Don't mention that again,' said Anthony. 'It is better as it is. Only you must take care of her, or I shall regret it.'

There was not much need to tell Dick that. All Mabel's friends were surprised to see how the next fortnight of freedom and happiness agreed with her. Dick's devotion, Anthony's tender friendship, Mrs. Strange's cheerful kindness, all made up an atmosphere very fresh and delightful to live in. And Kate Northcote had as much to do with it as anybody. She took possession of Mabel at once, as Dick's dearest treasure, and therefore hers.

Kate was a tower of strength to those she loved, unselfish, and generous, and truly sympathising. Without the soft ways of Mrs.

Lancaster, there was a safety in being with Kate, a dependence on her, a trust in the thoroughbred instincts she acted on so well, this truest lady that Mabel had ever known, which was a wonderful support to the girl in her new happy life. She and Dick told their aunt everything, and through her a whisper of Anthony's self-sacrifice reached Mrs. Strange. She said little, and looked grave for a day or two, but there was a touch of extra tenderness in her manner to her son.

In those days Mabel learned to know every corner of Carweston and its woody lanes, where the ferns were yellow now, and the red blackberry briars with their large fruit were hanging in festoons. Dick and she wandered down towards the river, sat on stiles, and came home very often with purple fingers; it was so pleasant to be two children in those still lovely autumn days, and these Carweston blackberries were the finest in the country. Sometimes they would wander across an upland field with their faces to the sunset, when the distant hills glowed like the gate of heaven in the deep splendid autumn colours, and every leaf and blade of grass was glorified. And Mabel would lift smiling eyes to Dick, as if there was no pain or trouble in the whole world now, and ask him if sunsets in New Zealand were as beautiful as these. For they often talked about Dick's country over the sea.

When Mabel had been at Carweston about a fortnight, without any molestation from Randal, who only called one day when she was far away with Dick and his aunt in the fields, Miss Northcote found that she must go back to St. Denys. She had many duties there, and they could not do with-

out her any longer, being most of them living duties in the shape of old and sick and poor people. So a charming plan was made for that day. Her carriage was to come and fetch her and Dick in the morning. Mabel was to go with them, and to spend the day at St. Denys, Mrs. Strange promising to drive over towards evening and fetch her back.

Mabel had never been in Miss Northcote's house before, and everything in it was a subject of delightful interest to her. Some old books of Dick's, and even toys, that his aunt had routed out from their hiding-place, were looked at and touched as precious relics by the happy girl to whom he belonged now. In fact, Mabel was by this time ridiculously in love with Dick, and everything belonging to him. All the enthusiasm in her nature, of which there was a good deal, had found its object at last. Life, before Dick came into it, seemed to have been a dark groping in the wilderness; and there had been a bright thread of happiness running even through this painful summer; for after all she had seen Dick sometimes, and had always known in her heart that there was nobody like him. Miss Northcote had to go out in the afternoon, and these two went with her. It was quite necessary that Mabel should know her way about St. Denys; so they wandered up and down the stony streets and lanes, with the glorious old view spread out before their eyes, standing in the low stone doorways of dark little shops, climbing the steps in the lower part of the town, where Mabel wanted a good deal of help. It was the one thing Miss Northcote was sorry for, in her own bright activity, that Mabel should be so helpless; still, with Dick by her side, this did not seem to

matter so much. They went down on the quay, where the dark-eyed children crowded and stared at them, and the steamers and boats passed swiftly up and down the broad Mora; where ivy and flowers hung from the roofs of the rugged old houses, and the fishwomen sat in their coarse blue gowns washing fish. Then they climbed slowly up the lane till they came to the house where old Fenner lived. Here Miss Northcote turned in for a few minutes, and Dick and Mabel walked on together up the hill. They came to the corner where three roads met—their own, the lane down to the Combe, and the road over the railway-bridge, that led up towards Captain Cardew's house.

'May we go down that lovely lane?' said Mabel.

'Not now, dear; you have had enough walking. Some other day,' said Dick. 'That's the way down to the Combe.'

It would have been only the right thing, according to St. Denys custom, for him to take Mabel into the Combe; but somehow it seemed to him that 'the place was curst.' He vividly remembered that evening when he stood at this very corner, and, in a miserable state of mind, watched those two people slowly coming up, stopping under those trees in the shadow, moving on in the starlight. And then that Sunday afternoon, when there was such a yellow misty glamour over everything, when Flora looked like a water-nymph as he sat beside her in the Combe and listened to that story which brought him so fortunately to his senses. Poor Flora! he thought Fate had been very hard on her. He stood still there a few minutes, half by instinct, to let Mabel rest after walking up the hill, half because these recollections were almost too strong

for him; and he could not tell Mabel about them, though she would have taken them like an angel, he knew.

'O Dick!' she said, her fingers suddenly tightening on his arm, 'there's somebody coming up the lane. Do you see! It is Mrs. Lancaster.'

'What an extraordinary thing!' said Dick. 'Let us go and meet her.'

Flora came up, walking slowly and wearily; the steep pull from the Combe seemed to have been almost too much for her. They met her under the trees, where the grass bank was in shadow, and twisted fantastic roots had broken out and wreathed themselves upon it. Flora took Mabel's hand, and looked from her to Dick, with a smile which was almost sad.

'You two?' she said.

'Yes, we two,' said Dick. 'Didn't you mean it, when you sent me up to ask after General Hawke?'

'What do you mean? I forget,' said Flora. 'But I am so glad—dear Miss Ashley,' as Mabel readily returned her kiss. 'Has he consented?'

'Don't remind us of our one trouble,' said Dick. 'We have not asked him yet; but he will, because he must. Mabel is staying at Carweston now.'

'Yes; I heard that from somebody,' said Flora. 'You are quite happy, then?' to Mabel.

'O yes,' said Mabel earnestly.

'You shouldn't ask her such leading questions,' said Dick. 'She must say so, poor girl, though I'm afraid she has had time to repent three times over.'

Mabel looked at him and smiled; Flora nodded slightly, smiling too; and then they all walked up the hill together to her gate. She did not try to de-

tain them, or ask them to come in, but wished them good-bye affectionately, and went with a slow tired step into the house.

'Poor Flora! What an awful break-down it is!' said Dick, as he and Mabel turned back to meet Kate. 'She's much better than she was, though, poor dear. That day I took you up to the Castle in Fenner's cart, I pulled her round in the boat afterwards, you know. Randal had been breaking off with her that very day on the sands, and the one thing she wanted was to drown herself. She would, too, if I had not talked her out of it.'

Mabel was horrified. 'She was so very fond of him, then?' she said.

'Fond! I should think so,' said Dick. 'Wonderful and unaccountable, considering what he is. I'm not sure now that she realises what a happy escape it was for her.'

'I wonder if she will ever marry now,' said Mabel.

'Not likely; she has had enough of that sort of thing. A disappointment in marriage, and another out of it, would disenchant most people.'

At last the happy day was over, Mrs. Strange had fetched her charge, and Mabel, leaving her dearest friends behind, was carried back to Carweston. She did not, however, descend into low spirits, but chattered away to Mrs. Strange with the greatest cheerfulness about Dick's plans and ideas for the future. She was now aware that it was very nice to have seventy thousand pounds; for though this fact had not in any way influenced Dick, it gave a pleasantly decided character to all their plans. In a reasonable way they could do what they chose, and Mabel had already made up her mind that

this should be what Dick chose; she did not feel that she had any talent for organising life, and at present only cared for the new sensation of being happy. Mrs. Strange thought some of her ideas romantic, and lectured her on them; but Mabel always took refuge in Dick's opinion, till Mrs. Strange shook her head, and said, 'Engaged people generally lose their senses for the time. You will know better one of these days, my dear.'

They were just driving through the village of Carweston.

'Shall I?' said Mabel, smiling; but then suddenly all the light-hearted enjoyment fled from her face, and the old pained look came back to it. She caught Mrs. Strange's hand, and squeezed it hard. 'O, do you see?' she said. 'The Pensand carriage!'

CHAPTER XXX.

'STONE WALLS DO NOT A PRISON
MAKE.'

It was too true. General Hawke's brougham was drawn up at the door of Carweston House. When it had moved on, and Mrs. Strange's carriage had stopped, her first question to the servant was, 'Is Mr. Hawke here?'

'No, ma'am; a lady. She is waiting to see Miss Ashley.'

'Is your master in?'

'No, ma'am.'

'Who can this be, Mabel?' said Mrs. Strange, as they went into the hall. 'He said something about a chaperon. I wish Anthony was in; but I'll take care of you, child, never fear. This lady is in the drawing-room, I suppose?'

Mrs. Strange walked into the room, followed by Mabel, whose astonishment was great at seeing

a tall hard-featured woman, dressed in black, rise from her chair, and move forward with outstretched hand.

‘O!’ she said. ‘Miss Wrench, Mrs. Strange.’

Mrs. Strange remembered hearing of Miss Wrench, and received her graciously. Mabel stared with wide melancholy eyes.

Miss Wrench took out a note, and presented it to her.

‘That will account for my presence here,’ she said. ‘Mr. Hawke was unable to come himself. Miss Ashley looks much better for her stay in the country air.’

‘Yes, I think she does,’ said Mrs. Strange, ringing the bell. ‘I hope you have not been waiting for us long?’

‘No; not ten minutes,’ said Miss Wrench.

‘We have just driven back from St. Denys. How is General Hawke to-day?’

‘He is a good deal better, thank you, as that note explains. I arrived last night. You may as well ask Mrs. Strange to peruse the note, Mabel.’

Miss Wrench seemed inclined to take up her old authority. Mabel quietly gave the note to her friend, and while Mrs. Strange read it there was silence, except that she looked up to say to the butler,

‘Bring tea, if you please.’

‘My dear Mabel,—We have now endured your absence for a fortnight—I speak for my father as well as myself. He is better, and gets up, though he does not leave his room yet. He is exceedingly anxious for you to come back; and I have thought I might facilitate matters by asking your old friend Miss Wrench to come down to us for a short time, till he is up and about again, that

you may not be without a companion. He wishes me to say that he hopes you will find no difficulty in returning to-day with Miss Wrench in the carriage. He begs to thank Mrs. Strange for her kind hospitality to you. You understand that I am writing entirely for him, and I am glad to think that he is well enough almost to dictate the letter. I will say no more, as I hope to see you this evening.—Yours ever,

‘RANDAL HAWKE.’

‘Very well, my dear. We must have your things packed up at once,’ said Mrs. Strange quietly.

Mabel looked at her with pleading eyes; she thought Anthony would not have given her up so easily. And if Dick was there! But Mrs. Strange had been unkind enough not to ask him to come back with them to dinner, an invitation that Mabel had watched for so anxiously. Was there really nothing for it but to go back to her prison? And how awful Miss Wrench looked! Here Mrs. Strange differed slightly from Mabel; she thought Miss Wrench had an honest face, though narrow and severe. She would have felt much more distrust of a more plausible person. Yes, it must be. Mrs. Strange poured out her tea, talked agreeably to the forbidding stranger, and was cruel enough to ask Mabel if she had enough sugar. Sugar! when her heart was breaking! She was a naughty rebellious girl at tea, and when she went up-stairs soon after the tears were running down her face. Did Mrs. Strange really know what Randal was, that she sent her back to him without any compunction? O Dick!

Some minutes later, when Mabel was alone in her room, Mrs. Strange knocked at the door and

came in. She sat down in an armchair, and told Mabel how sorry she was to lose her.

'But, my dear girl,' she said, 'we must remember that General Hawke is your guardian after all—your father made him so—and no one else has any legal right over you. I am only so glad that he is better. You don't dislike him so much, do you?'

'O no,' said Mabel dismally. 'He was always kind.'

'I knew him pretty well, some years ago,' said Mrs. Strange, 'and certainly he had then the feelings of a gentleman. And you must remember that we live in England, in the nineteenth century, and that it is quite impossible for you to be made to marry any one against your will. The thing can't be. Now take my advice: make the best of Miss Wrench. I believe she is a good sort of woman, and will take care of you, if you will only let her. And—if Randal says anything more to you, complain to his father. Not fretfully, like a child; but like a woman with a character of her own. And I should say the sooner General Hawke and Dick understand each other, the better for all parties.'

'But there's Randal!' said Mabel, for Mrs. Strange seemed to ignore the one ruling power at Pensand.

'Well, and if there is Randal!' said Mrs. Strange. 'Randal is not a brigand or a kidnapper, though he may be fond of his own way. Randal has no right whatever to control you, as long as his father is alive. Remember, you are a free woman, with a right to a will of your own. General Hawke may perhaps prevent your marrying before you are twenty-one, but he *cannot* make you marry against your will.

Now cheer up, be spirited and determined. You could be brave enough if Dick's life depended on it; remember that his happiness depends on it, as well as your own. And be as friendly with your guardian as you can.'

Mabel came up, smiling, and kissed Mrs. Strange, murmuring a few words of thanks.

'Don't thank me. I like to see young people happy,' said Mrs. Strange. 'Now I must go down-stairs. I left Anthony to entertain Miss Wrench, because I thought you wanted a lecture.'

'Yes, I did. I will try to be more contented,' said Mabel penitently.

'The Pensand fortifications are hardly strong enough to keep Dick out, are they?' said Mrs. Strange as she left the room.

Mabel screwed up her spirits and courage, and talked to Miss Wrench all through the drive. She also met Randal, who received them at the door, with a calm self-possession which surprised him. He saw at once that there was a change in Mabel. It was not only that she looked better and handsomer, but somehow in that fortnight she had managed to grow up. She no longer coloured and looked down when he spoke to her, but quietly met his eyes; some new strength seemed to have come to the girl, and a new cheerfulness with it. Miss Wrench was also astonished at the change, which she attributed to the influence of this agreeable and handsome Mr. Hawke. From this it is plain that Randal restrained his feelings, and did not let Miss Wrench see what a bore he thought her. Mabel had come to the conclusion that she was a blessing.

The advance of autumn was giving a little wildness to the gar-

den, where there only remained a few scattered roses ; but the view with its many colours was lovelier than ever. When they looked out after dinner the moon was up, and long soft shadows were lying across the lawn.

'Is it too late to go out?' said Randal.

'Yes, I think so,' said Mabel. 'I am going up-stairs now to see your father.'

'Shall I come with you? You will find him rather deaf.'

'No, thank you,' said Mabel gravely. 'I like better to go alone.'

She went up slowly and thoughtfully to the old man's room. Mrs. Strange seemed to think that her fate depended on him so much more than on Randal, and this was rather comforting, if she could bring herself to believe it. But then Randal had always represented his father as quite equally anxious with himself for that marriage which was now happily impossible. So that it was with some doubt and anxiety that Mabel knocked gently at the door, opened it, and stepped noiselessly into the General's room. It was shut up for the evening: two candles were burning on the table, and the General's armchair was drawn up close to a bright little fire. The old man looked white and weak and worn out as he lay back in his chair; but it was a noble old face still. His eyes were shut, and he seemed to be asleep. Seeing this, Mabel came gently forward and sat down on a footstool near him in front of the fire, from which she shaded her cheeks with her two hands. There she sat for half an hour or more, watching him and listening to his even breathing; so busy too with her own thoughts, that she did not feel the length of time. Something told her that life was

a different thing now—that she only had the right to give herself away, and that now she had done it, nobody could undo it. As long as Dick and she were true to each other (and that of course would be always) no real misery could come to her. It did not matter where she was, in Pensand Castle, or Carweston House, or in the freedom of dear bright St. Denys. Even two years might be lived through, under such conditions, Mabel almost thought. Presently General Hawke opened his eyes, and saw her sitting there. The change in his breathing told her that he was awake, and she got up and came to him. He held her hand affectionately, and drew her down to kiss him. Then she brought her stool close to his chair, and he kept her hand in his, while he talked to her in low kind tones, half reproaching her for going away from him; but then saying that of course it was best for her, and asking what she had been doing at Carweston. It made Mabel very happy to perceive that all the wandering had passed away from his talk; his brain had recovered its strength; the only sign of weakness seemed to be this touch of gentle patient indulgence. She could not say that he had ever spoken to her unkindly; but yet there was a change, a wonderful softening. It almost gave Mabel the terrifying idea that he was going to die. He talked slowly, and sometimes half to himself; but all that he said was thoughtful and pleasant to be heard.

'Ashley's child,' he murmured once, after a little silence. 'She has his eyes, too; he used to be like a pretty girl, though there was not a finer fellow in the Staff Corps. Mabel, my dear, do you remember the day when you first came here?'

'O yes; how beautiful it all was!'

'Poor old place! And what a shy little girl you were! You look stronger and livelier now, I think. I am sadly changed, you see. I shall never be fit for anything again. Remember this—it is as well to take care how one lives, for "the night cometh," and then the work is done for good. The night is come to me. I am a great deal older than your father. I married late in life; but you know all that. An odd fancy of Randal's, isn't it, to send for your governess again? We did very well in the summer. I hope he doesn't mean her to stay long.'

'Not after you are down-stairs, I think,' said Mabel, colouring a little.

'Then I'll come down as soon as possible,' said the General, with more cheerfulness. 'We must get rid of her. Then we can go on living as we did in the summer, and we'll have another drive to Morebay.' His brow clouded, and he looked at Mabel anxiously. 'What was that story about Randal and Mrs. Lancaster?'

'Had we better talk about that now?' said Mabel gently. 'It is all over, you know, and it is wiser to forget those things.'

'I don't understand it clearly,' said the General. 'Did he want to marry her? Very extraordinary.'

'He did at one time; not now,' said Mabel.

'She was pretty, but a person of no family. Randal will never marry, I suspect; he wants so many things. And his debts are becoming serious. What do you say to a mortgage on Pensand, our old home, where our people have lived for generations! It was reserved for my son Randal to bring *that* to pass. Don't tell him I mentioned it to you.'

'No. How dreadful! I hope it won't come to that,' said Mabel.

'It will, if it has not already. Randal has so many difficulties. He is a strange fellow. Do you know what he has been bent upon, my dear, for some months past?'

Mabel bent her head. General Hawke put out his thin hand and stroked the red cheek nearest him.

'Poor Randal! Have you given him any answer yet?'

Mabel turned round and looked up into the General's face. He should understand one thing, at least, she thought.

'Randal has asked me a great many times,' she said, 'and I have given him one answer. I cannot marry him. I never could. The thing is quite impossible.'

The old General looked sad, but he held her hand still.

'When my father made you my guardian,' said Mabel, 'he did not think, did he, that you would try at all to make me marry against my will? He must have trusted you; he must have thought you would take the same care of me that he would have taken himself. You know I could not be happy with Randal. Please don't say anything more to me about marrying him.'

Her eyes were full of tears; but there was a brightness and a courage in them, and a strength in her voice, though it trembled, of which General Hawke was quite well aware.

'Come, Mabel,' he said, 'you must not do me injustice. I did enter into Randal's plan, it is true, and for many reasons; but one of them was that I liked the idea of having you for a daughter. You are right about him, though. And I see you are capable of judging for yourself. I must leave you to yourself, then, in these

matters. Take my promise. No undue influence of mine shall be exerted to make you marry anybody.'

The General had spoken in a clear voice, quite like his former self; but he sighed, shook his head, and drooped weary eyelids when he had done. Mabel pressed his hand by way of thanks.

'We won't say anything to Randal about that,' he went on presently. 'But it would be wrong, very wrong. Time spent in a sick-room makes one see right and wrong so much more clearly. Curious, too, that you should have reminded me of what your father would expect. I had been thinking of it myself. But Atkins & Jones are managing your money matters all right; so you have not come to much harm through us, having a will of your own. Well, well, I wish I had never undertaken it.'

'You have never been anything but good to me,' said Mabel affectionately.

'Thank you, my dear. I am glad it has happened so. Randal would expect me to be sorry, but the old place may as well go; it would never prosper, if unfair means were used.'

He did not seem inclined to talk any more; but Mabel sat by his side for some time longer, till Randal came into the room.

'How good and kind you are!' he said, in a low voice, standing on the hearthrug.

'I like this much better than being down-stairs,' said Mabel.

'Not so sorry to be at home again?'

'If your father wants me, I am glad to be here,' she said, glancing at the General, who was sitting with his eyes closed; he had hardly roused himself when his son came in.

'You don't consider me?' said Randal, in the same undertone.

Mabel shook her head with a slight smile.

'You are changed, Mabel. What is it? I need not have sent for that good woman down-stairs, to please Mrs. Strange; you are quite equal to chaperoning yourself. Tell me what it is that makes you so different.'

'Some day I'll tell you, perhaps,' said Mabel.

'Some day you'll tell me everything, won't you?' said Randal.

Mabel was more surprised every minute to feel that her dread and horror of him were gone, and that his presence made no difference to her.

'I don't know—but I'll tell you *that*,' she said.

He stood looking at her, as if she was some interesting puzzle, while she gazed into the fire.

'Do you think my father much better?' he said, half under his breath. 'Never mind, he can't hear, and he is dreaming, besides. To tell you the truth, I don't expect him to last much longer. His mind is so very strange; have you noticed that?'

'No; not at all,' said Mabel. 'He has been talking to me quite sensibly.'

'Not like himself, though. Hasn't he been talking religion, and counting up his sins, and wishing he could live his life over again, and manage things better—better from his present point of view? I have heard a good deal of that lately.'

'I see nothing strange in it,' said Mabel. 'When you are old and ill, perhaps you will feel the same. I hope many people do, and I don't believe it is a sign that their minds are weakened.'

'You are a very effective preacher,' said Randal quietly, as

he stood looking across at his father. 'Yes; even I, too, may come to this.'

"Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust."

It is certainly good for us to contemplate our latter days, the end of this "strange eventful history;"

"Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything."

Nevertheless, Mabel, it will be bad enough when it comes, without thinking of it beforehand. Have you seen your white kitten since you came back?

'Yes,' said Mabel. 'She is very much grown.'

'Poor Fluff has been neglected lately, and I have felt it,' said Randal.

'O, not at all. She is a lovely creature. I like her very much,' said Mabel. 'Now I think I'll go down to Miss Wrench.'

The General half roused himself to wish her good-night, and Randal held the door open for her.

'The angel in the house,' he whispered, as she went out.

Mabel was brave and cruel enough to answer this scrap of sentiment with a careless little laugh.

CHAPTER XXXI.

GENERAL HAWKE'S SURRENDER.

THE next few days, though long and tiresome, passed very quietly. Mabel sat a great deal with General Hawke, and when she was down-stairs devoted herself politely to the amusement of Miss Wrench. She seemed suddenly to have learnt the art of keeping Randal at a distance. He had never been repelled by any shrinking, by any indignation even; but to meet him with a smile, to laugh when he tried to

be serious, and to take no notice whatever of some of his most marked looks and speeches, was a course which seemed to have been taught to Mabel by a completely new kind of instinct. It was, in fact, the feeling of safety, backed up by the General's promise and her confidence in Dick. She no longer feared Randal; he saw that very well, and became careful not to annoy her, trying to make friends again, and to bring her and himself back to their old footing of the summer, when they first began to call each other by their Christian names. Miss Wrench was, of course, a great protection to Mabel, as nothing could be said before her. She marched about with a dragon-like air, but in fact, being in a sense off duty, and not exactly responsible for Mabel's behaviour, she was enjoying herself very much. Randal talked a good deal of nonsense in desperation, got up political arguments with her, and was considered by her a most intelligent amusing man. She only wondered that Mabel did not seem to appreciate his company more. Mabel herself was a good deal disturbed, as the days went on, at seeing and hearing nothing of Dick. But one morning she had a letter from him, telling her that he had something most particular to say. He would come to the Castle the next day, and she must manage to see him alone. Mabel wondered how this was to be done, but Fate favoured her. That same morning Randal had a letter from London, which seemed to contain something very disagreeable, if one was to judge from the gloomy face he carried about all day. He watched his opportunity, and caught Mabel alone in the drawing-room after tea.

'At last I can speak to you,'

he said. 'That ancient dragon never lets you out of her sight. What lying things proverbs are! They tell you that when things come to the worst, they begin to mend. They don't. They never do.'

He looked so pale and vexed and worn, that Mabel half forgot her antipathy, and asked in a friendly voice what was the matter.

'An old story to me,' said Randal. 'Money troubles. I want to raise a large sum, and don't quite see how I am to do it. We must come to a mortgage in the end. But all this does not concern or interest you. I must go to town to-morrow.'

'I am very sorry you are in debt,' said Mabel.

'So am I. Well,' said Randal, with a return of his old carelessness, 'a few years hence, when I have a day out of the workhouse, and ask you for a shilling or two, you won't refuse it, for the sake of our old friendship. We might have got on very well, if there had been no mischief-makers. I think I shall start to-night.'

He was standing by the fire. Mabel vividly remembered that wet evening in the summer, when he had brought so much life and cheerfulness into that same room, when the blaze had crackled, and all the dancing lights were reflected in the steel, just as they were now. She was sorry for Randal as she looked at him.

'What is a mortgage, exactly?' she said.

'A fellow lends me so many thousand pounds, for which so much land of mine, or rather my father's, is security. I pay him interest. But if he chooses to call in the mortgage at any time, I must either pay him the capital, or he takes possession of the land. It is a very common arrangement.

Lots of estates are burdened in that way. This will be one more.'

Mabel listened to him silently.

'After my telling you this,' he said, 'you will of course give me credit for mercenary motives only. Must that answer of yours be always the same, Mabel?'

'Yes, Randal, always,' she said very gently and quietly.

'I am beaten and baffled on all sides,' said Randal.

It was a wild and windy afternoon; the trees were tossing themselves in the moaning air, and every now and then a sharp scud of rain came flying against the windows. These noises outside went on growing wilder, while Randal and Mabel remained quite still in the drawing-room. At last she got up and went towards him. He looked gloomily at the small slight figure, the delicate thoughtful face, the large eyes full of feeling, and as he looked he smiled a little.

'May I say something, Mabel, without offending you?' he said. 'You need never be afraid that that money of yours will be the chief attraction. I don't know what you have done to yourself in this last fortnight.'

'O, don't talk to me like that,' said Mabel, in her old simple way. 'Won't this mortgage make your father unhappy?'

'Perhaps so,' said Randal. 'But he is too old to care much.'

'How much money do you want?'

'Ten thousand; and I'm tired of the Jews.'

'Look here,' said Mabel. 'If I was to write a letter to papa's lawyers, and ask them to let you have it—would they?'

'No, they certainly would not,' said Randal. 'And if they would, I could not take it. You are very much too generous. That shilling, fifty years hence, is all I can accept from you. Mabel, it

is rather cruel of you to make a man feel ashamed of himself.'

'I didn't mean that at all,' said Mabel, blushing deeply.

'Of course you did not. Well, a thousand thanks—and apologies too,' he added, with a quick glance and a smile.

Mabel knew that her past persecution was covered by those three words, and forgave Randal with all her generous little heart.

Miss Wrench came in at the moment, so that she could not answer in words; but she gave him a smile, which, if rather sad, was full of charity.

The hours went slowly on, and brought the next day, when she hoped to see her Dick again. Randal started by the last train that night, in pouring rain and driving wind; the late equinoxials had come at last, and were rocking the ships in harbour, and driving wild clouds of salt spray for miles inland. The next day the storm continued. Mabel wandered from room to room, dividing her time as best she could between her guardian and Miss Wrench, who sat shivering over the fire. The morning passed away, and no Dick. At one o'clock the clouds cleared away and the sun came out, a fresh wind still blowing; there was no rain but the flying showers that shook themselves from the trees.

After luncheon, standing in the drawing-room window, Mabel turned various things over in her mind. Should she go out and meet Dick? But she might perhaps miss him, for there was no knowing which way he would come. And how was she to see him alone? Miss Wrench would never dream of leaving them together. Mabel glanced over her shoulder at Miss Wrench, who had gone back to her favourite fireside corner. It was a good

steady face, she thought, having studied physiognomy of late. A face to be trusted, though perhaps likely to be disagreeably candid. And Miss Wrench, innocent as she was, had been very useful as protector against Randal. She was a woman, after all, though an ugly one, and hardened by a struggling life.

'Girls are so horrid; no wonder she should be horrid too,' thought Mabel. 'I wonder if she was ever in love. I'll talk to her a little, and see what comes of it.'

'Miss Wrench,' said Mabel, wandering back to the fire, 'do you think it is best to be married, or not?'

'My dear, young ladies should not—' began Miss Wrench, with a reproving air.

'Not while they are at school, of course,' said Mabel. 'But afterwards they are obliged to, you know. Tell me what you really think about it, as if I was—five-and-thirty.'

'A married life,' said Miss Wrench, 'entails great responsibilities. But if the parties suit each other in disposition, no doubt there is a corresponding amount of happiness. Many of the troubles of life are avoided by an unmarried person. But on the whole it is a solitary lot. Some characters are naturally fitted for it; others not.'

'On the whole, then, you think it is best to be married?'

'It depends entirely on character,' said Miss Wrench.

'Really there is a nice look in her eyes,' Mabel thought. 'I shouldn't wonder if the poor old thing had had a disappointment when she was *very* young.'

'I believe I shall be married some day, do you know,' she said.

'My dear,' said Miss Wrench, staring into the fire, 'I cannot say that you surprise me.'

'Don't I?' said Mabel, rather surprised herself. 'But I haven't told you anything about it.'

'Some things are visible,' said Miss Wrench.

'O, but you are quite mistaken. Now, if I tell you, will you promise to keep it secret?'

Miss Wrench turned her eyes gravely from the fire to Mabel's face.

'You know me too well,' she said, 'to expect me to countenance any underhand arrangement.'

'This is not underhand at all; quite the contrary,' said Mabel. 'It's true that we haven't asked the General yet; but he is sure to consent, because he told me the other day that I might decide for myself. The fact is, he is coming this afternoon, I hope, and he wants to speak to me alone. I want you to be so kind as to go out of the room.'

'I cannot undertake this task, Mabel,' said Miss Wrench, with a slightly grim smile, 'till I am informed who the gentleman is.'

'You remember him,' said Mabel.

'What! Is it possible! The young man in the train?'

'That very young man,' said Mabel, nodding.

She felt that she was talking rather flippantly on a serious subject, but it was Miss Wrench's fault.

'How unaccountably extraordinary! The General disapproved of him,' said Miss Wrench.

'All the stories against him were false,' said Mabel.

There was no time for any further arguments, for just then the butler opened the door, and Dick walked in. Certainly he did not seem troubled with the fear of anybody's disapproval. He recognised Miss Wrench at once, and for a few minutes talked pleasantly to her and Mabel.

Then, with a face of the deepest gravity, Miss Wrench got up and walked out of the room.

'I never thought she would,' said Mabel, with a sigh of relief, as Dick instantly moved to the sofa, where she was sitting.

'She's a brick. Now I have a great deal to say to you.'

Dick's explanations were rather confused; he had really so much to say, and was in such a hurry to say it. And then there was the fact that he and Mabel had not seen each other for several days, which made it necessary to stick in quite irrelevant questions here and there.

'How has Randal been behaving?'

'O, very well. Nothing could be better. He is gone to London about some money business.'

'A good riddance. But look here, this was the important thing I had to say. How bright you are looking! Wasn't I in a towering rage, when I found you were gone back! So was aunt Kate: we used a lot of bad language. My dear child, you are making me talk all this nonsense, and I really have something serious to tell you. Much too serious to be pleasant. I don't know what is to be done. Aunt Kate thought perhaps you would go with me, but her notions are always wild.'

'Where are you going? Of course I'll go with you; at least, if—if you like, Dick.'

'Well, I have had a letter from Herbert, in a tremendous hurry to have me out there again. He has been building a new house, a very pretty one. There was a man with us for a time, who was going to live in it, but he's gone; which is altogether a great bore, for Herbert has more on his hands than he can manage, and you understand that half the concern is mine.'

'New Zealand! You are going back!'

'There, my darling Mabel, don't cry. You'll only make it worse for me. Don't you see, I'm somehow bound in honour not to throw Herbert over, to say nothing of profit. Yes, it seems as if I must go. And soon too. To be of any real use, I ought to sail in the *Empress* next Thursday fortnight.'

'O, how dreadfully, dreadfully soon!' sighed Mabel.

It was impossible to help crying over such news as this, and Dick himself seemed to think it bad enough, as he did his very best to comfort the girl whose happiness he had taken under his care. The other side of the world! Anything else would be bearable, it seemed to Mabel; and, O dear! it was hard, when she had just been thinking herself so happy. She was very sorry for herself, and for Dick too, and for some time he found her almost inconsolable.

'Aunt Kate is a mad woman, isn't she, Mabel?' he said at last, in a low doubtful voice. 'The idea of your going with me is preposterous, of course.'

'Is it?' said Mabel, with a sudden flash of joy, which faded away as suddenly. 'Ah, yes, you wouldn't want me out there. I'm not active or strong enough. A poor little creature like me would only be a hindrance to you.'

'Mrs. Herbert is not strong a bit,' said Dick. 'She doesn't do much: reads novels, and feeds the poultry if she likes, and goes out riding, and has the prettiest and smartest drawing-room you ever saw. She would be a charming friend for you, and the other house is only a few hundred yards away. And we wouldn't stay there more than a year or two. Then we would get rid of the whole concern, and come home,

and buy the nicest place in England. You see my only reason for going out now is not to leave Herbert in the lurch; he has been one of my best friends. So you see, darling, even if you don't go, I shall soon come home to look after you—and there's aunt Kate. I can't bear the notion, though, of you and I being at the Antipodes. Suppose anything was to happen to either of us. Now what do you think of it honestly, Mabel? A long passage, you know, and a strange country; but after all there would always be me.'

'Do you want to know what I wish?' whispered Mabel.

'Yes. I know what I wish myself; but one is naturally selfish.'

'I want to go with you, Dick, please.'

'Then all the guardians and aunts and parsons and governesses in England sha'n't keep you here,' said Dick, in the most demonstrative and decided manner. 'What next! I say, Mabel, we must go and collar the General.'

A few minutes later, Mabel glided with her usual gentleness into General Hawke's room. He was in his armchair, quite awake, almost unnaturally so, Mabel thought, when he asked her who had come up-stairs with her; he fancied it was a strange footstep. Mabel blushed scarlet, and answered that it was Mr. Northcote.

'He wants very much to speak to you,' she said.

'Bring him in,' said the General. 'I have not seen Dick for months.'

So Dick came in at once. He was quite equal to the occasion, and inquired politely how General Hawke was before he entered on his own business. Perhaps the General had some faint suspicion what this might be. He looked rather curiously from one to the other, as they stood side by side.

'Give Miss Ashley a chair,' he said, 'and find one for yourself.'

'Thank you,' said Dick; but instead of going for chairs he took Mabel's hand in his, looking hard at the old man with his fearless blue eyes. 'I want to ask you a great favour, sir,' he said.

'Too great a one to be granted to you, sir,' said the General.

But he sat up in his chair, and stretched out his hand to draw Mabel to his side.

'What does all this mean?' he said to her. 'Is that the fellow you want to marry?'

Mabel bowed her head; her 'Yes' was too faint to reach the old man's ears.

'He is not good enough for you,' he said. 'Dick Northcote, you know you are not good enough for her.'

'No, sir, I'm not,' said Dick meekly. 'But she seems inclined to put up with me.'

'And so you are come to ask for my consent, is that it?' said the General. 'Well, this is a very sudden affair.'

'O no; it has been going on for three weeks,' said Dick. 'I mean it has been settled for three weeks. We might not have troubled you about it so soon, but circumstances make it necessary for something to be decided.'

'Mabel need not have been afraid to tell me, need you, Mabel?' said General Hawke. 'We agreed that she must decide for herself. Sit down, both of you, and tell me all about it. You must give me a full account of yourself, Dick, and if I consent in the end, it will be to please your aunt, not you. I always wanted Mabel to be with her, though not in this capacity.'

He kept Mabel's hand in his, as she sat down close beside him. Dick stood leaning against the other corner of the chimneypiece,

and the General watched him with a sort of unwilling admiration, as he grew animated in his discourse about New Zealand and his prospects. He told the General all, quite candidly; his hope that they might be married before he sailed, and Mabel's willingness to go with him.

The General turned to her, and she did not contradict it.

'You are in a hurry, sir,' he said to Dick. 'Can't you leave her with me for two years? then she can do as she pleases. I suppose you think she might slip through your fingers.'

'Anything might happen in two years,' said Dick. 'You don't think it very strange, sir, that I should wish to take her with me?'

'Be quiet, both of you. I must think,' said the General. He laid his head back and closed his eyes. Dick and Mabel occupied the next few minutes in looking at each other; thus when the General's eyes suddenly opened, they caught Dick smiling.

'You needn't laugh,' he said. 'She won't have full control over her property till she is of age, if I give my consent ten times over.'

'O, hang her property, sir!' said Dick. 'I only want herself.'

'Very fine,' said the General; and then he shut his eyes again. Presently he told Mabel to give him paper and a pen, and with some difficulty, for his hand was weak and shaky, he wrote his formal consent to her marriage with Richard Northcote. He gave the paper into her hand, and she kissed him, blushing, with her eyes full of tears.

'There! God bless you. I could not do otherwise,' said the General; and then he shook hands with Dick, who tried to thank him in words.

'Try and deserve it,' said the General. 'That's all I have to

say to you. A good deal more, though ; it is no use doing things by halves. How on earth is this young lady to get all the clothes she wants before she sails with you ?

'My aunt will manage that for her,' said Dick.

'Your aunt is very good, and I have the highest respect for her. But how is she to manage it all while she is at St. Denys and Mabel is here? I have taken my wife abroad, sir, more than once,' said General Hawke severely ; 'and I know these outfits are no joke. Now, will you follow my advice? Mabel will, if you won't.'

'We both will,' said Dick, smiling.

General Hawke looked very gravely from one to the other.

'I have good reasons for it,' he said. 'I wish it to be so. Don't oppose me, either of you. It is best for all. I was thinking it over just now.'

They both waited and listened rather anxiously : it seemed as if something serious was coming.

'I wish Mabel to leave this house at once,' said General Hawke slowly and distinctly. 'I am not capable of taking proper care of her. Besides, the difficulty of the outfit will be best settled so. Will your aunt, Miss Northcote, be good enough to take charge of her? I can't have all the bustle of packing and so on in this house ; I am too old and too ill. Do you understand me, both of you, when I say that I should wish her to go away at once ?'

Mabel gazed at him in astonishment.

'It seems strange to you, my dear, but it is best,' said the General, in a low voice.

'My aunt will be only too happy to receive her,' said Dick. 'Do you mean, sir, that you would

like me to take her back with me to St. Denys this afternoon ?'

'Yes ; that is exactly what I should like,' said Mabel's guardian.

'You had better go and get ready. Wrap up well. I have a boat down there, and it is cold on the water,' said Dick to Mabel.

She was so amazed that she hardly knew what to do or say. There was something so wild and strange and uncivilised in being carried off in this way, and she would almost have made some objection, had it not been for a command which was quite new to her in Dick's voice and look. That seemed to leave room for no question at all. She looked at the General, who was leaning back, tired with thinking and talking ; but his eyes were shut again, and she found no response there. Then she looked at Dick, who enforced his command with a nod, and finally she went out of the room. Dick remained there for a minute or two. As he half expected, the General opened his eyes.

'You know my son Randal,' he said. 'His strong wish for many months has been to marry Mabel Ashley, and he has not yet lost hope. Of course he must now. But he has an obstinate temper, fond of holding on to the very last. It will be pleasanter and better for her to be away now. Don't tell her that ; put it on the outfit. Good-day, Dick. I shall see you again before you sail.'

Dick had suspected something of this sort, but he was glad the old man had explained himself, sad as it was that he should thus live in fear of his son. He could not find any name bad enough for Randal, as he went down-stairs to wait for Mabel in the drawing-room. Certainly it was time that she escaped from the keeping of such guardians as these.

A DAY'S ADVENTURES.

It is a great thing to wake up in the morning with a feeling of absolute leisure and repose; to know that you finished a heavy batch of work last night, and will not have any more till black Monday; that you want a holiday, that you have deserved it, and that you mean to take it. For the most part it is well to have a holiday carefully organised, with all the details amply attended to; but at other times I myself prefer to wander forth at my own sweet will, to study this mighty London, which seems to grow upon us more and more, and its suburbs, which I firmly believe to be the finest suburbs in the world. Of course I did not intend to turn out into the streets without the remotest idea of where I was to go. I had distinctly settled on going westwards. But I was trammelled by no engagement, I was fixed by no trains, I had calls which I could make or not make at my pleasure; and if any unexpected object of interest turned up, I could modify my programme, or alter it altogether. I had contrived to secure a sense of freedom and liberty, which is a very pleasant sensation, and one of the very first elements of a successful day out.

I had settled on several places for visits in the west, the far west, beyond where Hammersmith and Shepherd's Bush (so called, I believe, because Jack Sheppard used to have his haunts there) fade into the country. I was told that I should find an old-fashioned little village, that seemed to have

been stranded some centuries ago, and, alone of villages near London, not to have modified its character in the least. And so it was; and that it may preserve the unique distinction I leave it unnamed. Then I had also been told that if I proceeded along a certain highway I should come to a pretty lane; and that when I had gone a mile or two, I should find a park-lodge and gate; that there was a right of way through the park; and that in a corner of the park I should find the tiny parish church of perhaps the smallest parish in England. I verified the description to the letter. The domain was called an abbey; but although an immense place I could not detect anything of an abbatial character about it. The place was deserted. It had not been inhabited for some time. I passed through the leafy cloisters, the natural arches; I took the secluded path that led to the tiny church, hardly so large as the breakfast-room of the big house that overshadowed it. I did not meet a single soul. An intense oppressive silence reigned everywhere. It was like stepping out of the London streets into a cathedral. And this spot of loneliness, beauty, and refreshment is within the London postal district, very considerably within those limits. I longed to proclaim my discovery, to put some friend up to a good thing in obtaining leave to have a picnic on this delicious sward, beneath these noble trees. But I must leave it untouched; why spoil the poetry and the solitude?

I felt that thus early in the day I had reaped the full enjoyment of my holiday, and that fate could not spoil it for me.

Passing away from this grove, which might have been Armida's, I came to the side of a deep sluggish canal, which drifted through a wide range of meadows. Here was still the loneliness; the fish leaped in the stream, and the kingfisher came down, a flash of coloured light, on the fish. I exchanged a few words with some folk on a canal-boat; and save for knowing that these canal-boats sometimes abound with dirt and disease, I would have been content to have travelled a few miles in it. Close by a bridge spanning the canal was a pretty village, and in the village was a little inn, and an arch beside it, whereon was inscribed 'Tea-gardens.' Now with tea-gardens I have only scanty sympathy. I observed that there were various carriages and farmer's chaises close by; and entering the garden, I found it most skilfully laid out, and the choicest flowers inspected by an excellent company. Might all tea-gardens be like this! And so into the high-road.

Now if there is one sort of walking which really taxes and tires one, it is a long, hot, unshadowed, unvarying high-road. It is a depressing kind of work, a sheer waste of time, patience, and boot-leather. There was no railway-station on this road. On some roads railway-stations are dotted nearly every mile, and you almost wonder if it is worth the company's while to shed them at such frequent intervals. But on this road there was no station, no omnibus, no cab. I trudged on like the weary camel-driver. Presently a brewer's dray, raising a cloud of dust, appeared to diversify the scene. Horses were big

jovial-looking horses, as befits dray-horses; driver to match. Driver and I stopped simultaneously, as if moved by a hidden sympathy. He himself was leaning over the edge of the car; there was a kind of driver's stool to which I was welcome. I sacrificed my dignity to my ease. The dray was proceeding at the rate of seven miles an hour; my own walking pace was about three and a half; so, from a locomotive point of view, there was here a distinct gain. The brewer's man and I entered into a conversation, and I am bound to say that he proved the more interesting and communicative of the two. Like Andrew Fairlight, he told me all about the gentlemen's seats, and sundry anecdotes connected therewith. Becoming very social, the benevolent drayman asked whether I should like a draught of beer. As an abstract matter of theory, nothing would be pleasanter than a glass of beer; but as we were bowling along under a broiling sky, without a single house of refreshment in sight, it was difficult for the unaided imagination to realise that vision. I intimated this to my new-found friend, and looked up a shilling, that, in return for my ride, he might satisfy his own thirst on a convenient opportunity. But the jovial drayman collected a few straws and produced a gimlet, and in a second a hole was made in a cask and a straw inserted, and his power of suction evinced considerable vigour and rapidity. Now here was an ethical quandary for a man out on a holiday—a hot thirsty man. I thought then the operation I witnessed cast some light on the reduced condition, and perhaps the flat flavour, of various casks of which I had heard complaints. I supposed the proper plan would be to give him

a lecture, and confiscate the shilling.

The people were not less interesting than the scenes on this particular day. A jaunty young fellow overtook me, and asked me the time. He was evidently backing himself against time for the day's walking. His holiday was for two days, and he intended to walk all the way to Windsor to see his friends, and all the way back. He didn't like being a clerk in a bank. He only had some fifteen shillings a week at present. But there was no future for him; he could not see how a clerk was to get on. He meant to walk to Windsor on the high-road. The youth had no intention of conducting his walk on any æsthetic or scientific principle. I explained to him that by planning his journey he might obtain some delightful strolls by the river-side, and diminish distances by taking short cuts through pleasant fields. But his feeling was that of one of Mr. Trollope's heroes—'Tis dogged that does it.' Nothing would satisfy him but a literal prosaic trudge to Windsor and back. He was a fine-hearted young fellow, and we journeyed on pleasantly together. By and by, however, he observed that I was not a very good walker, which I thought an unmerited reflection; and quickening his pace he wished me good-bye, and was soon striding ahead.

A morose-looking man was looking over a garden-hedge. The garden was a good one, evidently a nursery-garden, though there was no placard or announcement to that effect. The man was gazing over his hedge at the outward world, and, with a gush of that cheerfulness which a holiday inspires, I ventured on a remark complimentary of his fruits and flowers.

'Sir,' he said to me gravely, 'I am a reserved character.'

'How much?' I said to him.

'Sir, I am a reserved character. I do not address myself to strangers.'

'That is not sociable.'

'I am not sociable. I am quite the opposite thing; I am a reserved character. I have lived here for eighteen years. I have never given any man a cup of tea all these years. No man has ever given me a cup of tea. I maintain an habitual reserve.'

'Sir,' I said, 'if you will come with me, I shall be happy to offer you a cup of tea. And if ever I call upon you, I shall expect you to offer me a cup of tea.'

His features relaxed into a grim smile. A new and sudden light seemed to have shot across his horizon of life.

'Well,' he said, with a puzzled look, 'that sounds fair—nothing could be fairer. All right, sir;' and he grasped my hand.

That cup of tea is expected to come off shortly.

Travelling westward, one met tramps. That was a matter of course. Equally as a matter of course, they begged. It was rather hard lines. Acting on the fine old motto, *Homo sum: nihil humanum a me alienum puto*, I entered into a little social conversation with a tramp, and tramp asked me for a pot of beer. I considered that I was 'in for it;' but this necessarily set some limit to any further brotherly intercourse with tramps. My rule is, which I borrowed from a great political economist, not to go beyond a penny. I say that this is the rule, but it is not the exception. As we go on in life, we ought to understand the lore of the human countenance, and to be able to diagnose between what is true suffering and the false pretence of

it. I walked on through a long country lane with a young man whom I took to be a young gentleman of the neighbourhood, but who avowed himself a tramp. He was a veritable *impransus*. His history was very simple. His mother was a poor widow. He had been usher in a school. He had lost his situation, spent his money, and did not like to return home. He meant to work his way to a town in the west where he had some friends. He did not mind tramping. He did not mind doing some harvest work in the fields. I tested the youth by taking out my pocket Horace and requesting him to translate a stiff bit in the *Satires*; he stood the test well. I was able to render him some effectual help. My own donation was contemptible enough; but it so happened that I was the almoner of a benevolent lady, and I was glad to think that I had here a good case. I gave him my address, and begged him to write to me, and I could perhaps do something more. As a matter of fact, I mentioned the case to my friend, who in consequence was anxious to send him a bank-note. But the young fool never wrote. We had some food together, and we parted.

I had now worked my way to Brentford, and was glad to walk fast through the long, dirty, ugly main street till I came to Syon Park. It is a lovely walk through the park, passing by the Duke of Northumberland's house, and coming out hard by Isleworth church, just opposite the river. The grand mass of trees and foliage just opposite the Church Ferry makes it one of the finest points on the Thames. I took an eastward direction until I could enter Kew Gardens, perhaps the best gardens of their kind in Europe. The latest addition of a tract of

forest land, as it may be called, renders this a most delicious solitude. I was reminded of my abbey-park and church. You might fancy yourself far away in a Canadian wood. But I fully sympathised with the indignation of those who justly grumble that the grounds are not open till the afternoon. To many people the morning is the best time for studying trees and flowers, and besides, much cannot be studied in half a day. I was very much pleased with a young Scottish gardener whom I met here. I asked him the name of some plant, and he gave me a curious word. I forget what it was, but it was a hybrid word, and provoked my criticism.

'You gardeners play curious tricks with language. The name you give is half Latin and half Greek.'

'Sir,' he answered, with quietness and dignity, 'we find that the Latin is enough for genera; but when we have a great number of species, we are compelled to resort to Greek as a more copious and flexible language.'

This was certainly very well even for a gardener so acute and well-instructed as a Scottish gardener generally is.

While thus climbing up Richmond Hill, I bethought myself of a man with whom I had some slight acquaintance, who had recently taken to himself a new house, furniture, and fittings, which last included a new wife. I passed his house, and looking through the gates on to the lawn saw the man himself, with the *placens uxor* in the distance. I hailed him through the open gate, and he responded 'with effusion.' He showed me his gardens—very pretty gardens in their way, and gardening is the loveliest amusement with which an Englishman can delight himself.

He showed me his furniture, and, being of an ecclesiastical frame of mind, there was plenty of old oak and stained glass, and the walls, in paper and pictures, were excellently toned in unison. He insisted on showing me every reception-room, and would have shown me the rooms up-stairs, only I was content to take the 'up-stairs' for granted. Of course I congratulated him on the *tellus et domus et placens uxor*. He then suggested that we should converse, and left me to choose between the library and the garden. Now in my tour through the rooms I had noticed, not without approbation, a well-filled gazogene and lemonade-siphon in one room, and some delicious fruit in another, and in a third the 'tea-things,' though I fancied, from the appearance of things, that tea was over. But my friend was a great deal more intent on improving my mind than improving my body. He was preëminently a serious character. He enlarged on the painful subjects of the frivolities of Richmond, and the necessity of providing improving literature for the masses. My intelligent readers will perceive that by this time of day I had a right to be hot and hungry. But while my friend did full justice to his considerable natural eloquence, he did not show the slightest symptoms in the direction of the fruit and lemonade. But my own mind was now strongly set in that direction, and so, having improved it by his conversation, I betook myself to a pastrycook's. Hospitality is not now what it was once, and probably it was even more than a barbaric virtue. Moreover, we hardly look for it in the suburbs of London as in the country. Still one likes to see an hospitable intention, which in this case was conspicuous by its

absence. Above all, avoid people who insist on showing you their new houses, and expect you to admire their furniture, and call upon you to praise their *ménage* generally. They are generally profoundly self-satisfied, fussy, and conceited, thinking so much of themselves that they have no time to think of others. I be-thought myself, however, that I had a friend in the neighbourhood, an old good friend, *valde dilectus*, of whom, however, I had lost sight, as people do lose sight of each other when severed by distance and by circumstances. I had had a pressing invitation from him for many months standing, and I thought that an evening's talk with him about books and art might wind up the day not unprofitably. It was not so to be. And let me warn the reader that, if you mean to accept an invitation, not to be too long about taking it up. Because it may become a dead letter in the course of time. The people may go away, or become ill, or drop into a fortune, or 'bust up.' With a great deal of difficulty, a difficulty which every one will appreciate who has hunted up suburban addresses, I rang and asked if Major Leslie was at home. When the door was opened there stood in the hall a tall and stately aged gentleman, very different from the slight, graceful, youthful figure which I sought. He advanced very courteously, however, and said,

'I am the new tenant, sir. Major Leslie went away just a fortnight ago.'

I was very sorry. I had made up my mind for a talk with the Leslies. I had made up my mind for some tea. And I really did not see why I should go without my tea because the Leslies didn't happen to be still in the house.

'I hope, sir,' I said, with my most winning gesture, 'that you will have the kindness to invite me to stop to tea.'

The stately old gentleman turned pale. In the course of a useful and prolonged life he had never hitherto met such an instance of coolness. All the legislation of etiquette and formality was suddenly abolished. If I had had a feather in my hand, I could have knocked him down with that feather. But I am bound to say that he responded very nobly to this call upon his hospitality. He introduced me to a most charming family, he gave me a most excellent tea, and it was only the fear that my visit might be an intrusion which caused me to withdraw very early. O, why cannot Christians have their tea together oftener, and without fuss and ceremony?

I made my way to Richmond Bridge. I lounged on the bridge admiring the prospect on either side, and going down the steps I was soon opposite the little flotilla of pleasure-boats. I was pretty certain of finding some men whom I knew. Presently a stalwart form in flannels was by me, and after some little waiting another man came up. Now these handsome and affable young fellows, City friends, had given me to understand that they had bought a boat, and, giving me a very liberal choice of dates and a wide margin, had intimated that any evening they would row me anywhere. The boat was a beautiful boat, somewhat slight, but finished off in the brightest style of nautical architecture. But I made the painful discovery that these gentlemen were engaged in the pursuit of 'learning to row,' and it occurred to me that this was something like experimenting on my *corpus vile*. They took with

them, probably on my account, an experienced boatman. The boatman's conversation was of an autobiographical turn, with a somewhat melancholy tinge in it. He told us of the number of lives he had saved, and especially of one gentleman whom he had fished up from the bed of the river, and who had appropriately rewarded him with his gold watch. I think we all had gold watches, and it seemed to me that the boatman had a slightly fiendish expression of countenance, as if he thought that he had a good chance for another. The river that divine summer evening was covered with boats of all kinds, as peopled as Regent-street with carriages in an afternoon. They kindly relegated me to the place of honour, where I had nothing to do but survey the scenery and criticise the rowing. Contemplated as a work of art, I cannot say that I was greatly impressed by the rowing. My young friend who was steering was impartially distributing his attentions to the fair occupants of the boats, instead of attending to his own proper business, the result of which was that we were frequently driven ashore or dashed wildly into the surrounding craft, to the considerable amusement of the ladies in question. The man who rowed had contracted an evil habit of catching 'a crab' and falling back into the middle of the boat. The general result was that one's body acquired a centrifugal tendency, and was flying out of its seat for two or three hours. I know this reach of the river pretty well, and began to reckon up the unfortunate accidents and melancholy deaths that had happened upon it within recent years. So we went on beyond the place where the famous Miss Berrys used to live, and past the Duke of Buccleuch's lawn

(which was the duke who used to sit on the lawn and say, 'O, that wearisome river, I wish it would cease flowing'), and by the grounds of the Orleans Club, entirely deserted that charming summer evening; and the lovely arcades and unvisited terraces of Ham House; and Eelpie Island, where eelpie is never to be got; and Pope's Villa (I have never yet been able to see the Grotto), and Strawberry Hill; and then through Teddington Lock, out of the tidal waters, along the broad fresh river between green shores. And these places are immemorial places for me, not only for the associations connected with the sites, but for the old days and the old companions belonging to them, in solitary rambles, or with festive picnic parties.

Barring the constant terror of asphyxia in the water, I rather enjoyed the expedition. I remember we alighted on a pleasant lawn sloping down to the water, where we imbibed our modest shandygaff, and I was astonished at the swift succession of visitors who alighted from their boats to recuperate. I was very favourably impressed with these parties, generally a young man with his sweetheart, or perchance his bride, and thought that they must be nice people to prefer the pure quiet attraction of the river-side to the gaieties of London. I cannot say that I liked the steam-launches. But, except in the hands of a few silly or malignant

persons, I do not think that they would interfere with small craft, or with the gentle brotherhood of the angle. The large steamers seemed to me a great nuisance. They are built expressly for the river, shallow and wide, and displace an immense quantity of water. As soon as you are in their wake, you suddenly find your frail boat amid tempestuous waves. The only plan is to face and mount them, otherwise you would be infallibly swamped.

Coming back there was a new terror in store for us. For it had grown to dusk, and the dusk had grown to dark, and all the little boys of the neighbouring villages had turned out to perform their ablutions in the Thames. They were around us like a swarm of fishes. Every now and then you saw a small white curly-pated head; and as two powerful men were rowing at full speed, if the oar had come in contact with the head, there was a distinct chance that the head might go off at a tangent. It is astonishing what daring little boys might do, but there is doubtless a special Providence which watches over them. We managed to disengage ourselves from the human shoal, and were soon nearing Richmond Bridge once more. The hospitable young fellows were hanging out supper—cool salad and substantials, Apollinaris water and accompaniments. So we waited the last few minutes for the last train, and, as old Pepys would have it, 'merrily home to bed.'

SWAN GOSSIP.

THERE are sundry old mss. extant relating to Swan-Marks, which remind us how numerous and curious are the special circumstances connected with the 'royal bird,' as the gracefully-formed and silently-moving swan is called—specialties of time, place, favouritism, symbolism, and poetical fancy.

The swan is a 'royal bird' in England in this sense, that none of the Queen's subjects can have ownership of it when at large in a public river or creek, except by grant from the Crown; whereas the Crown may appropriate such a bird at pleasure. A silver swan was a device in the badge of many of our early kings; and in several other ways the bird was exceptionally honoured.

The ownership of swans is associated with the singular custom of Swan-Marks or Swan-Nicks. In creating the privilege of swan-owning, the Crown grants a swan-mark to the owner, which becomes to him a kind of trade-mark or register of possession. Hence the necessity of devising different marks for different owners, to enable each to identify his own swans. Our public libraries contain many old mss., depicting, either in pen-and-ink or in water-colour, the swan-marks belonging to different persons in stated localities. So far back as the time of Richard III. a royal order was issued, to the effect that no person other than the King's sons should have a swan-mark or a collection of swans, unless he possessed a freehold of the clear

yearly value of five marks—a significant indication of the extent to which regal and aristocratic privilege was carried in those days. Forty years later, in the reign of Henry VIII., commissioners were appointed to control the swanneries in the river Witham, Lincolnshire; these commissioners comprised among their number Dymoke, the Champion of England. Ordinances were drawn up and issued by them, decreeing, among other things, that no person possessing swans should appoint a new swanherd without a license from the King's swanherd; that every such functionary on the river Witham should be bound to attend upon the King's swanherd on his summons, under peril of fine; that the King's swanherd must keep a book of swan-marks, to see that no new marks shall interfere with the old ones; that swan-owners and their servants are to be registered in the King's swanherd's book; that the marking of the swans should be done in the presence of all the swanherds on the river, and on a particular day or days notified beforehand; that the cygnets or young swans should receive the marks of the parent-birds; that if the parent-birds bore no marks, they, as well as their young, were to be taken possession of for the King; that no swanherd must mark a swan save in the presence of the King's swanherd or his deputy; and that when the parent-swans belong to different owners, the latter shall share the progeny equally between

them. We may here remark that during the first year the birds are called cygnets, in the second year gray-birds, and in the third white swans, the plumage being then perfect. The marking or nicking is performed on the cygnet, in the first year.

The Library of the British Museum contains a thin book of discoloured leaves of vellum, entitled *Orders for Swan-Botes, established by the Statutes for the Realm of England*. These 'orders' are thirty in number. Then follow the designs, in pen and ink, and in part coloured, of swan-marks used by the proprietors of lands on the rivers Yare and Waveney in Norfolk. Every owner's name is written at the side of his mark. Another old extant ms., drawn up in the time of Queen Elizabeth, gives representations of swan-marks belonging to proprietors in the hundred of Wisbeach, Isle of Ely. Another, of the same reign (found in the muniment-room of Losely House, Surrey), is a roll containing delineations of swan-marks belonging to different owners in that county. In the same reign also appeared a 'Table of Swan Laws, established and decreed by the Commissioners assigned by virtue of her Majesty's Commission of Swanning-Mote.' A collection of swan-marks for the river Thames was drawn up in the time of James I. At the Strawberry Hill sale in 1842 two old vellum books were sold, containing nearly nine hundred representations of swan-marks.

The mark is cut in the skin on the beak or mandible with a sharp knife or other instrument, or else branded with a hot iron. It is arranged in any one among a multitude of fanciful forms, representing annulets, chevrons, crosses, diamonds, crescents, initials, and what not. Sometimes it bears

reference to the heraldic arms of, or the office borne by, the owner. Marks are mostly cut on the upper surface of the upper mandible. The early kings had different swan-marks, according to taste. Her present Majesty, Queen Victoria, has, or had, a mark consisting of five nicks or cuts, two longitudinal and three transverse. There is a Master of the Royal Swans, a Court official, the real work being done by a swanherd, appointed by the Lord Chamberlain for the time being. Lord Buckhurst was at one period Master of the Swans for Surrey; the King had different Swan-masters in different counties, wherever he had a swannery. A Cecil, whose son was afterwards the great Lord Burleigh, and whose two grandsons founded the noble Marquisates of Exeter and Salisbury, was Swan-master under Henry VIII., and Bailiff of Whittlesea Mere in the fen country.

The old abbeys and corporations, many of them, possessed swanneries. At Abbotsbury, in the long narrow stretch of water behind the remarkable Chesil Bank in Dorsetshire, the abbot had a swannery granted to him in the pre-Reformation days. At the dissolution of the monasteries it passed into lay hands, and is now owned by the Earl of Ilchester. It is said to be the largest swannery in the kingdom, and an object of great interest to visitors. The city of Oxford had once a swannery, often known as 'a game of swans,' these birds being regarded in the light of game. In the sixteenth century, when a state dinner was not considered complete unless a swan was included in the bill of fare, this swannery was rented under an engagement to deliver yearly four fat swans, and to maintain a certain number of old ones. Eton

College holds the privilege of keeping swans on the Thames, and their mark is cut, as a record, on the door of one of the inner rooms of the building.

Concerning the city of Norwich there is some very curious swan gossip, for a knowledge of which we are indebted to Mr. Yarrell, whose *History of British Birds* is a standard work on such subjects. The late (or a late) Bishop of Norwich gave Mr. Yarrell much information concerning the swannery belonging to the corporation of that city. (As the present Bishop has now filled the see about twenty years, the prelate meant by Mr. Yarrell was probably the last but one.) 'The town-clerk sends a note from the town-hall to the public swanherd, the corporation, and others who have swans and swan-rights. On the second Monday in August, when collected in a small stew or pond, the number usually varying from fifty to seventy, and many of them belonging to private individuals, they begin to feed immediately, being provided with as much barley as they can eat; and are usually ready for killing early in November. They vary in weight, some reaching to twenty-eight pounds; if kept beyond November they begin to fall off, losing both flesh and fat, the meat becoming moreover darker in colour and stronger in flavour. A printed copy of the following lines is usually sent with each bird:

TO ROAST A SWAN.

Take three pounds of beef, beat fine in a mortar,
Put it in the swan—that is, when you've caught her—
Some pepper, salt, mace, some nutmeg,
an onion,
Will heighten the flavour in gourmand's opinion.
Then tie it up tight with a small piece of tape,
That the gravy and other things may not escape;

A meal paste, rather thick, should be laid on the breast,
And some whited-brown paper should cover the rest.
Fifteen minutes at least ere the swan you lay down,
Pull the paste off the bird that the breast may get brown.

THE GRAVY.

To a gravy of beef, good and strong, I opine,
You'll be right if you add half a pint of port-wine;
Pour this through the swan, yea, quite through the belly,
Then serve the whole up with some best currant-jelly.

N.B. The swan must not be skinned.'

The good folks of Norwich must say whether this singular custom is kept up in the year 1879; we should rather doubt the poetical effusion, at any rate.

'In former times,' adds Mr. Yarrell, 'the swan was served up at every great feast; and I have occasionally seen a cygnet exposed for sale in the poulterers' shops of London.'

Some of the great companies of the city of London keep swans. The Vintners had at one period as many as five hundred, but the number is now small. The junior warden of the year is called the swan warden. So much do the company value their ancient privileges in regard to the royal bird that they have models of swans forming conspicuous ornaments of their hall. An old entry in one of the Egerton mss. relating to the Vintners' Company runs to the following effect: 'Money payd for expense in upping of swannes: Item, payd to James the under swanherd in the greete ffroste for upping of the Maister Swannes, iiij*s*.; item, for bote at the same tyme, iiij*d*.' An *Order for Swannes*, a tract of four leaves, dated 1570, speaks of 'upping daies,' and the duties then to be attended to. The term 'swan-upping' is vulgarly called *swan-hopping*; but it really means a visit up the

Thames to the swannery, or (possibly) the taking up of the swans out of the water to examine and nick them.

Mr. Yarrell says, 'The Vintners' and Dyers' Companies have long enjoyed the privilege of preserving swans on the Thames, from London to a considerable distance above Windsor; and they continue the ancient custom of proceeding, with their friends and visitors, with the royal swanherd's man, and their own swanherd and assistants, on the first Monday of August in every year, from Lambeth on their swan voyage, for the purpose of catching and marking all the cygnets of the year, and renew any marks on old birds that may by time have become partially obliterated. The struggles of the swans caught by their pursuers, and the duckings which the latter receive in the contest, made this a scene with our ancestors of no ordinary interest.' Gaily-decked barges belonging to the companies, with rowers suitably attired, used to be employed on such occasions; but the steam-boat has now superseded these slow-going modes of conveyance.

We may just remark that Queen Victoria's swans, in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, and elsewhere, numbered 232 at the time Mr. Yarrell wrote, comprising 108 fine full-grown birds and the rest younger.

A curious diversity exists in discriminating by names the sexes of the swans. Sometimes the pair of names are cock and hen, sometimes cob and pen, sometimes sire and dam; while in one district the pair are said to be Tom and Jerry, the latter certainly a strange appellation for a female bird. The swan-mark, known in old law-books as *cygninota*, is erroneously supposed by some persons to be made by removing

or cutting away a few of the feathers in the neck; but the cuts are, as we have said, made in the upper mandible of the beak. In the time of Richard III. the inhabitants of Whittlesea petitioned for leave to appropriate the wild swans, at that period very numerous in the district, because the town stood in a marsh or fen, and the swans were an important aid to their livelihood: the boon was granted. In regard to 'upping,' we may add that it was at one time (and perhaps still is) a custom on the Thames to give fees to fishermen and others who have kept a watchful eye on the swans during the inclement months of winter.

Curious are the bits of swan gossip scattered in the periodicals of past times. In 1769 a fire broke out at Messrs. Buxton & Enderby's oil warehouse, Paul's Wharf, consuming a vast amount of property, including twenty thousand pounds' worth of oil. During the conflagration the Thames seemed on fire, owing to the blazing of the oil that flowed out upon it. 'It is remarkable,' said a local chronicler, 'that the great quantity of oil which upon this occasion poured out upon the surface of the water, caused a mortality among the swans, destroying a prodigious number.'

In 1788 an 'upping' took place which, we opine, is not likely to be repeated at the present day; if it should, 'may we be there to see!' Or rather, it was in 1788 that the venerable Sylvanus Urban discoursed as follows: 'When the citizens, in gaily-decorated barges, went up the river annually in August to mark and count their swans, which is called *swan hopping*, they used to land at Barn Elms (or Barnes Elms), and after partaking of a cold collation on the grass, merrily danced away a

few hours. This was a gala-day for the village; and happy was the lad or lass admitted into the party of fine folks of London. This custom has, however, long been discontinued; it may be hoped not to give place to one less innocently festive.'

We learn also from Sylvanus Urban that Staines knew something about the Thames swans in 1793. An angler gave a description of an evening spent at the riverside hostelry known as the Bush in that town. 'We spent the evening in angling from the windows for gudgeons for supper, and in admiring a company of swans that were preening themselves at an ait in the river. The number of these birds on the Thames is very considerable, all swimming between Marlow and London being protected by the Dyers' and Vintners' Companies, whose property they are. These companies annually send to Marlow six wherries, manned by persons authorised to count and mark the swans; these men are designated *swan-hoppers*. The task assigned to them is difficult to perform; for the swans being exceedingly strong, scuffling with them among the tangles of the river is rather dangerous. Recourse is obliged to be had to certain strong crooks, shaped like those we suppose the Arcadian shepherds to have used.' Henceforth we will endeavour to associate swan-hoppers with Arcadian shepherds.

A wicked wight tampered with the royal swans in Hyde Park in 1811. 'A short time since two of the old swans, and four of those of last year, whose feathers were about turning white, were stolen from the Serpentine river in Hyde Park. The bodies were found tied to trees, without the skins and feathers, which have

been traced to a Jew who resides in the neighbourhood of Oxford-street, through his sending them to a feather-dresser to be dressed. The Jew has been taken into custody, and has undergone several examinations at the Public Office, Bow-street. The skins and feathers have been identified by a man employed in the park.'

The swans in the Thames, we are sorry to say, are accused of misbehaving themselves. They eat up the spawn of the perch, barbel, pike, roach, and chub to such an extent that the anglers are getting enraged. It is asserted that two-thirds of the entire supply is thus destroyed, lessening to an equal degree the potentiality of the much-valued freshwater fish by and by. Complaints to this effect were made twenty years ago; an improvement was effected by lessening the number of the swans; but an increase has since taken place. Marlow is especially wrathful; for there being no good spawning-ground between Marlow Weir and Cookham, the fish assemble in great force at the first named of these localities, where the swans help themselves bountifully to the spawn.

A few jottings may be interesting concerning the controverted questions whether these birds ever sing, and whether they sing in an exceptional manner just before death. The differences of opinion on these points are certainly remarkable.

Sir Thomas Browne (we believe) told of how,

'in swelling whiteness sails
Caistor's swan to western gales,
When the melodious murmur sings
Mid her slow-heaved voluptuous wings.'

In Iceland the singing of the swan is thoroughly believed. When heard at night it may, some conjecture, be a musical call

or signal given by one of the birds to the others. But on the other hand we must pay some attention to the words of such an ardent naturalist as Waterton, who mentions that he had often tried to ascertain whether a swan ever sings, but had met with no instance in the affirmative. The death-song of the swan, whether actually credited or not, has given rise to many beautiful passages in poetry, descriptive and figurative, such as Tennyson's line,

'The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul,' &c.

If Wordsworth had believed that the song of the swan were other than a fanciful idea, so earnest and observant an admirer of country life and phenomena would hardly have used the word 'mute' in the following beautiful lines:

'Behold! the mantling spirit of reserve
Fashion his neck into a goodly curve;
An arch thrown back between luxuriant
wings

Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs,
To which, on some unruffled morning,
clings

A flaky white of winter's purest snows.
Behold! as with a gushing impulse heaves
That downy prow, and softly cleaves
The mirror of the crystal flood,
Vanish inverted hill, and shadowy woods,

And pendent rocks, where'er in gliding
state
Winds the mute creature.'

A remarkable custom, to which it would not be easy to assign a probable origin, prevailed in olden days, viz. that of 'swearing by the swan.' As though the swan were invested with some mystical or mysterious potency, men swore by that bird to prove their sincerity. The knights in the age of chivalry swore by the swan, and sometimes by the peacock, or the pheasant, or some other bird of beautiful plumage. The Crusaders often took the swan-oath on setting out for the Holy Land. Mr. Keightley, in connection with an incident in the *History of England*, says: 'At the banquet held on this occasion, he vowed before God and the swans, which, according to usage, were placed on the table, to punish the Scottish rebels.' Among the Maitland MSS. is one that relates to a story, the only point in which that touches on our subject is presented as follows:

'I would gyf all that I have,
To that condition, so God me saif,
That ye had vowit to the swan
Ane yeir to be Johne Thomsonnis man.'

AFTER THE SEASON.

I HAVE left the stuffy city ; for its swells were leaving town,
And the Park has got so dusty, that 'twill soon be turning brown :
I had pretty well seen everything the season had to show ;
To have lingered on much longer would have really been *too* slow.

My topper and my patents, my toothpick and my crutch,
Are here quite at a discount, for I don't require them much ;
And I find it very pleasant on my back beneath the trees,
With a mild havannah scenting the already scented breeze.

Now my corns have ceased their twitching, and my close-cropped hair
 may grow,
While my tired eyes no longer the midnight's revels show ;
And still though far from dust and dirt some sirens may be seen,
For even here I hob and nob with Lila and Lurline.

It is indeed delightful to exchange the noisy street
For the peaceful shady pleasures of a rural cool retreat ;
Yet, while I own it's charming, I admit with half a smile
That its chief delight consists in leaving London for *a while*.

Though I love these shady alleys, and these nights so calm and stilly,
Yet they cannot hold a candle to the charms of Piccadilly ;
To be lulled to sleep by nightingale, and roused by early lark,
Is sweet, but O, far sweeter still my strollings in the Park.

This life would get monotonous, for what is to be seen ?
I'll soon be bored by Lila and wearied of Lurline.
I merely ran down here, you see, to rest one's flagging powers,
Before I once again resume my late and early hours.

O, the opera, the theatre, my diggings in Pall Mall,
My club just round the corner, and—the girls who dance so well !
Who square their rounded elbows, who do not dance but float,
While love and mirth play hide-and-seek around each dimpled throat.

Pale pleasure often thinks of these and hangs her weary head,
Although for her the throstle sings and flow'ry meads are spread ;
Although for her the murmuring brook in whispers tells the night
That rosy dawn is combing out her locks of golden light.

Yes, these vernal glades are pleasant—but not for very long ;
Let me see and hear sweet woman, not the song-bird and his song.
These silvan scenes are charming, for those who find them such ;
But let *me* stroll down Piccadilly with my toothpick and my crutch !

CECIL MAXWELL-LYTE.

11

LONDON SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER 1879.

MY LADY'S DIAMONDS.

I.

THOSE who are familiar with the environs of Dublin—their nooks and byways—are aware in how short a time even the pedestrian can transport himself from the stir and bustle of the City into sylvan scenery; among woodbine-scented lanes and rural spots, that might be miles away in the heart of the country. A ramble by the lonely sea-shore, on heath-clad mountain, or in quiet woodland, may be enjoyed by the dweller in the metropolis within the compass of a walk.

In the year 1862, when the circumstance about to be narrated took place, this nearness to the country was still greater than it is now, when the suburbs are extending themselves on all sides, and bricks and mortar invading the green fields and hedgerows.

A lady, whom we shall call Lady Mary V——, lived at that time in a country place, situated in so isolated a position, and with such rural surroundings, that it was hard to realise the fact of its being within six miles of the Castle of Dublin. A granddaughter, the offspring of her only child, who had died in giving her birth at

the age of nineteen, was her sole companion. Though not wealthy, she was in fair circumstances, and much sought after—mingling a good deal in society, and attending with religious scrupulosity all court ceremonials and entertainments.

No more stately dame trod the vice-regal halls on festive occasions than Lady Mary V——, as, accompanied by her pretty granddaughter, she made her way up St. Patrick's Hall to take the place on the dais to which her rank entitled her; and very graceful and dignified she looked in her sweeping velvets and old point lace, and a magnificent set of diamonds—bequeathed to her by an old Marchioness, her aunt—that often went nigh to eclipse those of 'her Excellency' of the day, herself.

Lady Mary always made a point of returning to her country home after assisting at festivities, public or private, in town. She disliked the trouble as well as expense of sleeping at an hotel; and on winter nights she and her granddaughter—well muffled in furs and wraps—would ensconce themselves, each in her snug corner of the brougham; beguiling

the way by talking over the party. Or else, while the elder lady calmly dozed, her young companion would give herself up to the dreams and air-built fabrics common to those before whom lies the garden of life to be laid out at their sweet will.

II.

SHIFT we now the scene to an humble dwelling in a back street in Dublin, occupied by a young tradesman, his wife, and child.

The room is clean and comfortable; hearth swept up, tea-things set out on a little table, the kettle singing on the hob, a nice griddle-cake browning before the bright fire. The man is seated, idle, before it, though it is four o'clock in the afternoon; his legs stretched out, a short pipe in his mouth, at which he takes an occasional pull while he stares moodily at the blaze. His wife glances anxiously at him from time to time and sighs.

Surely never was man so changed as Jim Ryan! So brisk and cheery as he was, working late and early at his trade, regular and industrious; and so loving and tender to herself and the boy. And now something had come over him—poor Susan could not tell what. He was gloomy and morose; neglected his business, and was often away, at times for whole nights together. There was never any sign of drink upon him, and neither at the Emerald Isle, the Lifeboat, nor any other 'public' was he to be seen. That she had ascertained. It was most unaccountable.

The regular earnings, so punctually brought home, had ceased. Some weeks they were short enough of money; and then again there was much more than sufficed. And once when Jim came in and threw down such a lot into her

lap that she cried out in surprise to know where on earth it had all come from, he turned round angrily upon her, and bade her in a surly voice to 'ax no questions, but spend it.'

Susan's perplexed and anxious thoughts were interrupted now by her little boy, who, for some minutes past, had been standing at the house-door watching. He was a delicate looking little fellow, of about ten years old, pale from the effects of an accident, and walking lame with a crutch.

'Mother,' he said fretfully, 'I don't think Aunt Nelly is coming at all. Sight or light of her I can't get all the whole length of the street; an' I'm watching till my eyes are sore. She'll not come at all, an' the lovely cake will be ruined.'

'No, the lovely cake won't be ruined; and she will come, you onpatient little mite!' said his mother, kissing the small thin face. 'There, sit ye down by the fire, my heart, and rest the poor leg. I'm going to wet the tea, and you'll see she'll be here before 'tis drawn. What would hinder her from coming? My lady has given her the day out' (Nelly was Lady Mary V——'s kitchen-maid); 'but in course she has heaps to do, shopping about the town, and divarting herself. And, sure enough, here she comes!' as a rosy-cheeked girl bounced into the room.

'How are ye all? and how's every bit of you, Suzy darling?' cried Nelly, throwing her arms round her sister, and hugging her over and over again, with the impulsiveness of her class and country. 'And little Micky—I declare he's looking elegant since he came out of the hospital—he'll soon be as well as ever. The ladies will be asking—they're cruel fond of him! Here, Micky, is a par-

cel of lovely things Miss Edith sent you ; and if you'll grope your hand in my pocket, maybe you'll find something I brought you myself, young man.'

Nelly chattered on, displaying her various purchases and telling her adventures of the day, while Susan poured out tea and cut the griddle-cake. Ryan took no part in the merry talk or meal ; he remained still moodily glowering over the fire.

'And now won't you tell us about the ladies?' said Susan. 'Are they going out a great deal these times?'

'Ay indeed, that are they,' said Nelly, 'it's the "saison" you know, nothing but balls and parties. Last month was the drawing-room at the Castle, and, O Susan dear, I'd give the wide world you could have seen them dressed. Mrs. Parks is very good-natured ; and that's more than can be said of all lady's maids, from what I hear tell. She come down to the servants' hall, after she'd done dressing the ladies, and told cook and me and the rest of us we might go up and look at them before their cloaks was put on. And O, but it was a sight ! The trains, yards and yards long, sweeping the ground ! And the feathers and the flowers and the jewelry ! My lady's diamonds blazing like anything ! The flash of them, when she'd turn her head sudden, you'd think would blind you. Splendid they are !'

'And very valuable too?' said Susan.

'Valuable ! you may say that. They're worth thousands ! Mrs Parks says that, a single one of them—ay, even one of the earrings—would make the fortunes of the likes of us. If we had the price of them diamonds, we might live in plenty and comfort, and

never soil a hand or do a turn of work for the rest of our days.'

'Dear, dear !' exclaimed Susan.

'Yes, indeed. And isn't it quare now to think of carrying all that money's worth about one ? I wonder my lady isn't afeard of travelling night after night along that lonesome road with them valuable jewels upon her, and no protection. If it was me I'd be thinking every whole minute I was going to be robbed and murdered.'

'But,' said Ryan, who had roused up, and laying aside his pipe now entered with interest into the conversation, 'she has her coachman, sure.'

'Is it Peter,' exclaimed Nelly, bursting into a ringing laugh,— 'ould Pether ? O, 'tis he'd be the fine protector ! Why, if you were to see him swathed up to go out at night, and scarce able to stir hand or foot, for all the world like an ould mummy in a picter-book, you'd die laughing. My lady is that careful of him, and that afraid of his taking cold, she's always buying him wraps and rugs and shawls and comforters ; and he thatches himself with them all, putting one on top of the other till you only see the end of his old nose peeping out. One time that I got leave to go into town for the night and sat up beside him on the coach-box, the horse picked up a stone. Well, to see him unrolling himself, and peeling off rug after rug to free first one leg and then the other, would wear the patience of a saint. "Arrah, man alive," sez I, "hand us over the picker and I'll hop down and have it out, and be back again in half a clap." "You !" sez he, facing round on me as if 'twas a young elephant was sitting beside him, "you ! A' what do you, a *foy*male, know about horses?" Ould Peter thinks

no one knows any mortal thing but himself. He's one that fancies he understands everybody's business better than they do themselves.'

'O, I know,' said Ryan. 'Sort of man he is, that would go for to teach a rat how to make a hole.'

'Exactly. But he's a decent old fellow for all that; my lady thinks no end of him. She wouldn't keep him, nor the horse, waiting in the street at night one minute. They'll be ordered at a certain time, and she'll look at her watch, and when the time comes, home they'll have to start. Mrs. Parks says she do think if it was the Lord Liffenant himself Miss Edith was dancing with she'd have to come away straight and leave the ball, sooner than keep Peter waiting below. At identically the same hour every night. Yis, *di*-entically,' repeated Nelly, proud (though with a slight misgiving) at having laid hold of an imposing word, and resolved to make the most of it. 'If there was people living beside the road,—only there aren't—they could tell what o'clock it was precisely when they'd hear my lady's carriage wheels, she's that exact and punctual.'

'And what time is it ordered?' asked Ryan.

'A quarter-past two; reg'lar as the clock.'

'And she always wears them diamonds?'

'O laws, no! only on grand occasions—the drawing-rooms and state balls and the like.'

'An' when will the next state ball be?'

'O, myself doesn't know for certain. Mrs. Parks could tell; it's her business, you know. St. Patrick's night there'll be a tremendous flare-up, an' the ladies will—'

'Psha! Nelly, never mind the

ladies and their dresses,' broke in Susan; uneasy, she scarcely knew why, at her husband's changed manner, and the sort of greedy excitement with which he listened to the girl, 'what does men folks care about clothes and jewelry? Can't you tell us about something else; the new garden, or the horses, or—'

'Speak for yourself, woman!' cried Jim, flinging himself round on his chair and glaring angrily at her. 'Just hold your prate, and don't go answering for other people's likings. Go on, Nelly, about the ladies. Does the young one wear valuable jewels too, like my lady?'

'She does not,' answered Nelly, 'only flowers and simple things. And very quare it is, as cook and I were saying. But Mrs. Parks snapped vicious at us; and sez she, bridling up, "Youth and beauty requires no ornaments." Daisies Miss Edith had at the last drawing-room, and snowdrops she's to—'

But Ryan apparently took no interest in either youth and beauty or daisies and snowdrops.

'Where,' he interrupted, 'does my lady wear those diamonds?'

'Well, I'll tell you that,' said Nelly, greatly pleased at the interest her gossip was arousing. 'There's her head-dress, the valuablest are in front of it—a tiara 'tis called—and stars all round the head and behind. And the stars themselves in the heavens don't shine brighter. And then a lovely necklace and brooch and earrings. O, it'll be a sight to see, St. Patrick's night, when they're dressed for the ball. Cook and me and the rest of us will be allowed up as sure as sure; and I wish you were there too, Susan. No more tea, darlin', thank you kindly. I must be going now.'

And with hugs and kisses, and many parting words, Nelly went off.

III.

A FEW days after her sister's visit Susan Ryan received a message from a friend in Sandymount begging her to come and spend the night with her there. The girl's mother was in a dying state, and the person who had hitherto shared her watch having been suddenly called away, she would be left alone with the dying woman if Susan did not come to her. Susan could not resist her friend's appeal, albeit very unwilling to leave poor Micky; for, thought she, with a sigh, 'it's as likely as not his father won't be home.'

Micky slept in a little crib at the foot of his parent's bed. There was in the outer room, where the family lived and took their meals, a box bedstead, such as is often seen in country cottages, which 'contrived a double debt to pay,' made a seat when the lid was shut down. It stood in a snug corner near the fireplace, screened off by a bit of low partition, so that it could not be seen by those in the room.

'Now, do you know what I'll do, Micky honey?' said his mother, seeing the shade that came over the poor little face when he heard she was going out. 'I'll make up the box-bed for you to sleep in, and the place will be as light as day with the elegant fire that'll be in it and will keep you company. So now, darlin', don't be frettin' or lonesome; I'll be back before you've time to miss me.'

'The box-bed! O mother, that will be grand!' And Micky, in the eager delight of a child at anything new, forgot his trouble at being left by himself.

For some time after his mother

had gone he lay awake, watching from his cosy nest behind the partition the reflections of the firelight flickering and dancing on the opposite wall. But soon even the charming novelty of the box-bed failed to keep him wakeful. Gradually the shadows grew fainter, and Micky fell fast asleep.

He woke with a violent start, and in a fright that seemed to take away his breath. There were voices in the room. Men were talking and smoking—he could smell the tobacco—and the fire had been stirred into a blaze and candles lit.

'I think, boys, we've settled it all now,' said a voice; 'and surely there never was a job came so neat to our hands. As I said before, three of us is enough to be in it; and enough is as good as a feast.'

'Right you are, Joe, and we understand well. One to seize the horse and deal with the old coachman, another to tackle the ladies, and the third to secure the diamonds as they're sthripped off.'

'No violence, boys, mind that!' Micky recognised his father's voice. 'Remember my bargain with you. D'ye hear, Joe; there must be no violence.'

'O lord, no!' said the man addressed as Joe; 'by no means, not at all! Pelite will be no word for us; butter wouldn't melt in our mouths. "You'll excuse us, my lady, for taking the liberty and making so bold as to throuble yer ladyship's honour; but, if it's plazing to you to be so koind as to hand us out the thrifle of diamonds you have about you, we'll be obleeged. Axing your pardin' for the intrusion—"'

This speech, delivered in mincing tones, provoked a roar of coarse laughter.

'They'll screech, to be sure,' continued the man, ceasing his

mockery, and resuming the brutal manner that was natural to him, 'faymales always do; but I've got some purty toys in my pocket will soon stop their noise. Don't be afeard, Jim Ryan, it isn't pistols or guns, nor neither swords or blunderblusses.'

'Whisht!' cried one of the party under his breath; 'what was that? I thought I heard something. Are you sure there's no one hearkening?'

'Sorra a one is there to hearken,' said Ryan. 'The wife's away in Sandymount till morning, and the child fast asleep in there,' pointing to the inner room.

'That ditch at the three-mile stone will be the very place to lie in wait in; and by all accounts we won't be kep' long cooling our heels, as they're so punctual and reg'lar.'

'And we'll be punctual and reg'lar too,' said Joe, who was evidently the leader of the party. 'And mind, boys, no Patrick's pot that day for any of us! We'll drown our shamrogue another time, and drink th' old lady's health and Jim Ryan's. It's the grandest haul that ever came in any one's luck. More power to the boy that put us up to it!'

IV.

WHEN Susan returned home, just as the day was breaking, she was startled by the sudden apparition of poor Micky, looking like a small ghost in his white night-gear, trembling in every limb, and with a face pale as ashes. Springing from his box-bed as the door opened, he flew to his mother, and clung round her, sobbing convulsively, as though his heart would break. The passion of terror and grief that shook his poor little frame was such as for some time to prevent her getting a coherent ac-

count of what had happened; but at last in broken words and sobs and gasps it came out. Too well the unhappy woman understood all. Her husband, her once good and industrious Jim, one of a gang of robbers.

Those who can recall the winter of 1862 may remember that gang whose maraudings in the neighbourhood of Dublin were so cleverly contrived as for months to baffle the efforts of the police to detect them.

What added to Susan's misery was the state of mind the little boy was thrown into by the knowledge that his benefactresses were to be the victims of the plot. Lady Mary and her granddaughter visited Mercer's Hospital, where he had been laid-up after his accident, and their kindness had bound him to them with strong ties of gratitude and love.

'I'll go, mother, and warn them, that I will, if I have to walk every step of the road on my crutches. I'll ax the way as I go along. Any one will tell me.'

'Yis; an' what do you think the men'll do to you for peaching on 'em? Red Joe, that's by all accounts the ferocioussest ruffian that—'

'I don't care! They may cut me into strips; they may throw me into the Liffey. I'll save them that was good to me.'

'And tie a rope round yer father's neck. A' hold yer tongue, child! You don't know what you're talking about. For your life don't let me ever hear a word out of yer head about telling mortal. If I thought a sintence of what you heard that night would ever pass yer lips I'd—I'd—I don't know what I'd do to you!' sobbed the wretched woman. And what she did do was to catch the child to her breast,

and smothering him with kisses, rock herself and him to and fro in her great agony.

She was truly in a dire strait. Afraid to breathe a word to her husband of the discovery the boy had made, lest it should ooze out and come to the ears of the men; and well she knew the desperate character of Red Joe, and that he would stop at nothing rather than be balked of his prize. Miserable at the thought of the crime Ryan was about to commit, and the intended outrage upon the dear ladies; and not daring to lift a finger to prevent it.

Day after day, too, she was beset by the entreaties and lamentations of Micky. The child was pining away before her eyes, 'frettin' the flesh off his bones.' He could neither eat nor sleep, and his wan pinched face, piteous to behold, went to his mother's heart.

'Ah, mother dear, if you only knew how kind they were to me in the hospital, and their goodness to every whole mother's soul besides, in the place! Miss Edith as tender and gentle as an angel; and like an angel she looked as she'd come gliding up the ward wid a step as soft as the falling snow, and the light from the windies as she passed 'em, glinting off her lovely golden hair that shone like the sunbeams. Herself was a sunbeam, sure enough, in that gloomy place. A nod an' a smile she'd have for every one, passing along between the two rows of beds to the top of the ward where Mrs. Lynch the nurse sat. And then, after giving the "good-morning" to Mrs. Lynch, and hearing all about the patients, back she'd come again and stop at every bed. The feeling way she'd talk to the poor crathurs, axing so pitiful what the accident was, and where they had

the pain! And the presents she'd have for every one! A bunch of flowers here or a bit of knittin', an' a book or a newspaper for them that were scholars and could read, and cakes and toys and scrap-books and pictures and sweets for the children. O, but the children doated alive on Miss Edith!' exclaimed Micky, with sparkling eyes. 'The pretty bright ways of her! And the plays she'd invint for them! They'd forget to cry when she was there. An' stories! She'd sit down an' tell them stories, to such as wasn't too bad to listen, till they'd be that took up with hearkening to her you'd not hear a moan out of them. Myself didn't feel I had the broken leg on me while she was talking.'

'You must tell me some of those nice stories, won't you, jewel?' said Susan, glad to see the child brightening over his hospital reminiscences, and trying to draw him on to forget for a little the subject he was unceasingly brooding on, and that was preying so ruinously upon his health.

'To be sure, mammy!' he cried eagerly. 'An' maybe they won't delight you! My lady—she too,' he went on, 'would be going about among the beds with something for every one. A packet of tea and sugar, or a screw of snuff, for the old grannies; and eggs and oranges, or a bottle of lemonade or raspberry vinegar—they're always kilt with the thirst, God help 'em! in that accident ward. If I was talking till to-morrow I couldn't tell the half of what those darling ladies' visits does for them poor patients. They'll be all lyin' there, tired an' fretful, wore out with the pain and the tediousness, and nothing to do or to think of the long weary day but their misery: restless and complaining and onreasonable, and poor Mrs.

Lynch's heart fairly broke with them. One calling for a drink, and another axing to have the pillow settled or the bandages; not knowing what to be at, the crathurs, with the dint o' pain and tiredness! And the children crying and wailing, and that cross and peevish, the world wouldn't plaze them. When in would come the ladies, and in a minute all would be changed! The groans and the whining would cease, and the pain be forgotten. You wouldn't think there was a bruise or a burn or a broken limb in the place.'

'A great relief and blessing, surely?' said Susan.

'Yis. And for an hour after they'd be gone and the door shut upon them, the buzz of talk in the ward wouldn't stop. Every one axing the other what she had got and showing their things, and maybe changing or dividing them. And the talk the young women would have about Miss Edith and every single thing she'd have on! Her clothes, an' her golden hair, an' her ornaments; for she always come to the hospital dressed grand on purpose. "To please the poor souls," sez she to Mrs. Lynch. Now wasn't that double kind of her, mother, dressing herself for sick creatures as if she was going off to a party? "'Twas better than a cordial the sight of her," the nurse used to say. "And if there was more in the world like them two angels of mercy, what a differ 'twould make to the poor!"'

Which sentiment, we—recording in this our true narrative the deeds of real characters, and copying from the life real scenes—do most heartily endorse.

'And to think,' sobbed poor Micky, breaking down suddenly at last, and bursting into a passion of grief,—‘to think of my darling ladies set upon by them villains!

—dragged out of their carriage in the dead of night!—the jewels torn off of 'em!—frightened out of their wits! O, mother, it will kill them! You must do something, you *must*!

'Whisht, Micky, whisht, my child; the walls have ears! Sure you know I can do nothing,' moaned Susan. 'Where's the use of going over and over again about what can't be helped?'

V.

THE St. Patrick's ball at the Castle on the 17th of March is always the most numerous attended of all the vice regal festivities. No special invitations are needed as at the other state balls. All who have been before presented are privileged to attend, on sending in their names to the Chamberlain. The numbers are generally swelled by many—families from the country and others—who from various causes have been unable to pay their respects at previous drawing-rooms and *levées*; and for these there is held a sort of small court, when his Excellency receives presentations before the ball opens and dancing begins.

Lady Mary and Edith had good-naturedly undergone the usual gathering of domestics to admire the glories of their attire before leaving home. The gardener's wife, the lodge-keeper's daughters, the poor lame dress-maker from the village, and a few other privileged outsiders, were among the gaping servants; Mrs. Parks standing behind her ladies, dignified and apart, waiting with her pins and wraps till the curiosity of the vulgar was satisfied; and Nelly, all unconscious of the dire mischief she had so innocently worked, grinning with rapture in the background.

The Lord Lieutenant of the

day was the popular Lord Carlisle, appointed viceroy for the second time in June 1859, on the resignation of Lord Derby's administration. An unusual number of strangers had come up to town, and the presentations were still going on when Lady Mary arrived at the Castle.

At last, however, they are ended. The procession is formed—Lady Mary and her companion taking their places in it by reason of her rank, and from her late husband having belonged to the household. 'God Save the Queen' rings out from the orchestra, and the glittering train, 'fair women and brave men,' bejeweled and bedecked, marches up the centre of St. Patrick's Hall, the Lord Lieutenant at its head, bowing graciously to the brilliant throng that lines his passage; with now and then a good-natured smile of recognition to some one in the crowd. When the procession reaches the dais the strains of the National Anthem give place to a lively country dance; 'Patrick's Day in the Morning' is played. His Excellency gives his arm to the Lady Mayoress and leads her off. Couple after couple follow in quick succession. Feathers are tossing in the air (for court plumes are *de rigueur* on this occasion). The ball has begun!

Why seek to describe it? The ball in St. Patrick's Hall differs not from any other,

'when youth and pleasure meet,
To chase the glowing hours with flying
feet.'

Young hearts beating high with excitement, joy, hope, love. Older ones taking their pleasure more gravely. Chaperons looking on at their youthful charges with pleased or anxious interest; entering with zest into the moving scene; bright and lively now, to

wax sleepy perchance by and by at the small hours; what time elderly gentlemen will be seen consulting their watches in tired anticipation of the carriage, and home.

Then will the 'flying feet' fly faster, making the most of the shortening time; their owners glancing regretfully up at the first faint flush of the gray dawn appearing at the windows of the hall and gradually increasing; they hoping the while that 'dear mamma' won't perceive it, and stealing a look to see whether she has got someone pleasant to talk to, and a comfortable seat.

Meantime the scene is most brilliant. St. Patrick's Hall with its magnificent proportions and adornments; the entire suite of apartments thrown open; the throne-room given up on this occasion to the dancers. The blaze of light! The delicious music! Lovely women in perfect toilettes, with stir of graceful plumes and sheen of diamonds—Lady Mary V——'s resplendent *parure* conspicuous among them. Men in court dresses and gorgeous uniforms—military, naval, militia, foreign, official—a dazzling kaleidoscope ensemble of scarlet, and blue, and rifle green, and gold and silver lace; orders and clasps, stars and medals, decorating many a manly breast.

Contrasting curiously with these is a gentleman in ordinary evening clothes, the only individual in the whole crowded room so dressed. As he enters, a knot of dowagers seated near the door, and evidently, from their glaring costume, not belonging to the 'upper ten,' wonder and stare with indignant disapproval.

'How strange!' 'How did he get in, without uniform or court dress?' 'Such ignorance of the rules! such cheek!' 'Why don't they turn him out?'

But he moves quietly on, his plain black suit and white tie making him the more remarkable and remarked, from the contrast with all the brilliancy around. A lady bows to him, and whispers to her neighbour, 'The American Consul.'

And now there is a stir. At a signal from the Chamberlain's wand of office, the band once more strikes up 'God Save the Queen.' The procession forms again and moves down the hall in the same order in which it has come up. The vice-regal party goes in to supper. Soon after this is over departures set in, and among the first to leave the Castle is Lady Mary V—— with her granddaughter.

Counting on her punctuality, three men, well armed, have taken up their posts at an angle of the road beyond the three-mile stone. They are crouched down behind a sheltering bank, watching breathlessly—the prize is a rich one. All is silent as the grave. Not a living soul have they met on the deserted road as they came out from town. The night is dry, a keen March wind blowing.

At last, to Red Joe's straining ears, there comes a faint sound. It is the carriage. Two points of light appear in the far distance. He clutches instinctively the gags in his pocket; one restless foot is already on the bank. In his hungry eagerness he can almost see the two cloaked forms as they lie back in their respective corners, more closely muffled than usual; for the night is cold.

Nearer and nearer sounds the click-clack of the horse's hoofs on the hard road; and larger and larger—like two fiery eyes—grow the lamps, as the doomed carriage, close at hand now, comes speeding onwards to its fate.

VI.

WE will now go back a little in our story, and change the scene from the 'halls of dazzling light,' to the accident ward in Mercer's Hospital. Not the one visited by the ladies and occupied by women and children, as described by Micky; but that on the men's side of the hospital.

Here, in one of the row of beds, lies—helpless and suffering—Jim Ryan. A dray had knocked him down, the wheels passing over his body, crushing his ribs, and inflicting internal injuries.

It is visiting-day. Susan and little Micky have just left the ward, where they have been spending some hours, when a stealthy step comes up the stair, and Red Joe—his hat slouched over his ill-looking countenance—appears at the bedside.

'My poor fellow, an' is this the way with you?' he whispers to Ryan. 'Of all the boys in the gang, you're the one we could least spare, an' here you are,—worse luck!'

'Yis, here I am,' said Ryan, 'an' serve me right. Serve me right for the devil's turn I done to them that were charitable and good to my own flesh and blood. O Joe, it's the curse of God is on me for my bad courses! 'Twill be on you too and follow you, if you don't give up—'

'Tut, man alive!' exclaimed Joe, 'd'ye think 'twas to listen to rot like that I come to this cursed hole? But I don't wonder at you, my poor chap. Small blame to any man to be down in the mouth, an' he lying on his back, sick an' sore. I come for to settle your mind about them ladies you're so sweet upon; and to tell you I'll see no harm that can be helped comes to them, no more than if you were to the fore yourself at

the job. And moreover, comrade, I'll take care you get justice and fairness about the dividing of the swag.'

'I'll never touch a penny of it!' exclaimed Ryan, 'or a penny of ill-got money ever again as long as I'm above ground. If I live to get out of this bed, with the help of God, I'll be a changed man.' (Ryan did live, and kept his word.) 'O Joe, Joe, don't do it! If ever you hope to see the light of heaven, don't!'

'Tis very like we'll give it up now—very like, indeed!' sneered Joe. 'No, bedad. But you'll see how virtuous, and purty-behaved we'll be, all of us, when we're living like gentlemen over in America on my lady's diamonds. Larry Burke is to take your place in the doings Patrick's night. Good-bye now, Jim. Never fear, but I'll see you all right and your pluck back again, when you're out of this den!'

The day after Jim Ryan's accident, Lady Mary and Edith were at breakfast when, among the letters brought by the morning's post, there appeared a shabby, queer-looking epistle addressed to the former.

'Honoured Lady' (it said), 'This is a warning. For your life Don't you and miss edith go Next or near the cassle patrick's nite. There's them that's Lying in wate to Stop your carridge and rob you of your dimonds on the Way home. i'd have gave you Warning Before this, only a near friend of my own was in it and now He's not, by the mercy of God. This comes from a friend. Take warning and Be said by it at Your per'l.'

'An anonymous letter,' said Lady Mary, tossing it across the table to Edith, with a laugh. 'How stupid these practical jokes are! Whoever wrote it to frighten me will find him or herself disappointed; it looks like a woman's hand. The idea of our being kept at home by a document like that!'

On reading it again, however, something in the tone struck Lady Mary, and she thought it might be as well, before committing it to the flames, to show the letter to Colonel Lake, the then Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

The Colonel looked grave as he read it. Taken in connection with the nocturnal outrages that had been so frequently reported to him, and the suspected existence of a dangerous gang of thieves, he viewed the matter in a serious light. After some deliberation and debate with Lady Mary, the interview was closed with injunctions and advice as follow:

'Your ladyship will go to the ball as usual, making arrangements to stay in town after it, and spend the night at an hotel. Your coachman must also remain, having given your brougham and horse into the hands of my men. All which arrangements must be kept perfectly secret.'

The result of which was, that when the three miscreants sprang out upon the carriage, expecting an easy victory over their defenceless prey, they fell into the strong hands of three stalwart policemen; who, flinging off the wrappings that disguised them, disarmed and handcuffed Red Joe and his comrades before they had time to recover the shock of the sudden surprise.

ON GOING ABOUT IN THE WORLD.

BY A MIDDLE-AGED ENGLISHMAN.

THERE is no doubt that locomotion is the most marked characteristic of the present day. Whether we are wiser or better or happier than our ancestors may be doubted; but we certainly run about in the way that would have affected them with intense mute astonishment. We run to and fro, and knowledge increases; that is to say, 'knowledge comes but wisdom lingers.' To use Satanic language, men run to and fro and go up and down. This 'going about in the world' is the visible material manifestation of the modern spirit. It is a spirit that pervades all classes of society, from the throne itself to the clerk or peasant who travels as far as he can within the limits of a Bank-holiday. While good old George III. scarcely ever left Windsor, and thought that he was doing something tremendous in going to Weymouth, the Heir-Apparent is a world-wide traveller; and her gracious Majesty makes a flight, only pausing at *the* Castle on her way from the lakes and mountains of Switzerland to the lakes and mountains of Scotland.

Doubtless this system of being always 'getting over the ground' is susceptible of being looked at in that three-cornered way of which I lately discoursed. To some persons this locomotion is the highest outcome of our civilisation. Just as Dr. Johnson rejoiced in being carried along in a post-chaise, so they rejoice in being carried along by an express train. Just as Lessing said, that

if you offered him the choice of truth and the search after truth, he would prefer the search, so there are many who if you offered to them the destination or the journey, would prefer the journey. They circulate freely. They 'keep on moving.' They hear the *Marchez, marchez, marchez*, the voice that was always addressed to the *Juif Errant*. Doubtless when we are abroad, there is a schoolmaster abroad also who is willing, if we are only willing ourselves, to teach us all sorts of curious and important things. No doubt also there is a very unfavourable aspect under which we may contemplate this fashion of our times. There is a certain amount of discontent, restlessness, and fever of the mind connected with this passion for change. There are moral symptoms connected with it which may yield material for diagnosis and prognosis. Many people, when they travel about, seem to slip off one nature and put on another. They say that when they are at Rome they must do as Rome does—which often means that they go over to the Church of Rome—and that when they are at Paris they must do as the Parisians do. *Telle est la vie*. Certainly, one sometimes meets with our compatriots disporting themselves abroad in a way that would greatly astonish their contemporaries in the streets of Little Pedlington, or in those of the great metropolis itself. But you and I, my reader, are accustomed to arbitrate between 'the falsehood of extremes;'

to believe that rich people are not so rich, and poor people not so poor, and good people not so good, and bad people not so bad, as seemeth to the world at large; of course not denying that there are absolute and authentic instances of each order. We will examine hopefully and impartially some cases of this modern phenomena of 'going about in the world.'

But first let me be practical, with the humble desire to be useful. The soldier looks at the priming of his rifle before he goes into action. The older knight used to examine his weapon and armour that he might not by defect or oversight lose his fair chance at the tournament. And our experienced railway traveller will have his ticket in good time, and label his luggage and secure his corner and adjust his wraps. You may almost tell how a man goes through life by the way in which he goes through a railway journey. Every sensible man realises the importance of details. He knows that for the want of a nail the steed may be lost, and that for the want of a steed the rider may be lost. And, in reference to this modern manner of ours 'of going about in the world,' it is worth while to bear in mind some practical details, such as the necessity of being punctual and good-humoured and courteous. Neither lose your train nor your temper, but be cool, observant; nor be one man abroad, while you are quite another at home. My own rule is to preserve a continuity in life, and not let the order of your days be abruptly severed by the accident of an expedition. Minimise the elements of change. If you are reading a work, carry it with you. If you have begun letters or articles, have them with you in your writing-case. If you should like to put your feet into

slippers and pillow your head on your bag for your customary allowance of forty winks, I really see no objection. Only extend to others that enlightened consideration which you feel for yourself. For instance, if you are going to a friend's house, adjust the time of your arrival to his hours; not that he will not readily give you everything his house contains, but the British domestic moves in ordered grooves, and, should he or she be at all put out, mutters something about 'this day month.' And be careful to catch the tone and have the tact to detect the circumstances of each case. Even if you are wearied and feel absent, you must make yourself a living portion of the circle to which you find yourself belonging. In one sense, 'going about in the world' is like going into action. You are realising temptations and dangers which hitherto have been mainly matters of speculation. You are supposed to have been realising stores of experience and good sense, and how you must apply them to each emergency that arises.

One reason why men should move about is that this is a taste which in the case of many people does not last very long. Of certain people it may be said that they have beyond their fellows the absolute passion for locomotion. Their friends say of them that they never sleep twice in the same bed. If they want a change of air, they are facetiously recommended to go home and stop there. In these days the range of travel is carried to a wonderful extent. A man thinks nothing of going round the world, or of travelling to the Equatorial lakes, or penetrating to the Third Cataract, or exploring the rivers and forests of Brazil. Many a traveller now can say,

'I am become a name
For always roaming with a hungry
heart. . . .
For all experience is an arch, where
through
Gleams the untravelled future.'

But this taste for locomotion, which was so violent at one time, often turns out to be a very transitory taste. We think we shall never tire, but we tire often. The traveller knows what travel can do for him, and also what it cannot do. He outgrows the early feelings of romance, which lend so much charm to the early days of travel. He had rather listen than talk, and by and by he would rather be quiet than listen. He becomes nervously alive to the peril of sleeping in strange beds, and of catching cold in railway carriages. He has brought his own comforts to such a point of perfection, that he knows he will fare second best wherever he may happen to go. And so the quondam traveller comes to prefer his own fireside to any other place. 'Ah,' said the great Duke of Marlborough, when he came back to Blenheim Palace after dining with a neighbouring parson, 'home is home, be it ever so homely.' Eventually he will make a rule of never accepting an evening invitation, or extending his walks after sunset. So young fellows were very appropriately started on the grand tour at just that time when they would enjoy it most and get the most out of it. It is a wise instinct of the British father that when his son has left school or college he will start him out to see something of the world. Therefore, by all means, let the good old fashion of the grand tour be maintained and extended. 'Home-keeping youths have ever homely wits.' It is by all means advisable for them to go out in the world. They must gather their roses while they may. At the same time, I have noted

some curious cases in which old people have made a sudden attempt at rejuvenescency. I have known people who have led a quiet domestic life for many years suddenly become possessed of a perfect passion for travel. Perhaps there has been some break up in their homes, and they think that they will travel about until they settle down again. It almost seems as if at a far-advanced period of life Nature makes an effort to renew her youth. I have heard of quite old people cutting fresh teeth. And a certain juvenility of mind will emerge, correspondent with this cutting of the fresh teeth, when the feelings seem to grow fresher, the powers of observation keener; when old people in their St. Martin's summer will actually fall in love and prosper, and, contrary to all the staid habits of middle years, will run about the country with the impetuosity of youth.

This 'going about in the world' is necessary as a means of verification and correction. We smile, and not unjustly, at the man who simply gets his ideas from books. We may read about things in books, but we must observe and verify them in actual experience. What theory is to practice, such is reading to going about the world. A man may get a very good idea of different kinds of life by reading contemporary novels; so exact, so minute, so photographic is the school of modern realistic fiction. Yet real life differs from the fiction as the photograph differs from the living object. Or, to change the illustration, just as the actual results in mechanics differ from the scientific results, on account of friction and atmospheric pressure, of which no exact account can be taken, so the creatures of real life have something over and above any representations in the page. I am bound to say that when I

have known a man, and have afterwards come to read his life—for it is now invariably the fashion to publish a biography—I have sometimes found very great difficulty in effecting an identification. Moreover, there is a certain subtle atmosphere floating about the world which is always variant from time to time—a manner of thought, a method of life, a prevailing tone of feeling, which can only be found in the society of the day. This is ‘the spirit of the age,’ the *Zeitgeist*, of which we have heard so much. It is something to get near the heart, to be connected with the movers of great movements. You will find, for instance, that political and philosophical writers will often avow clearly and unmistakably in conversation those tendencies and aims of their speeches and writings which in the speeches and writings themselves are only obscurely and indefinitely hinted at. For instance, many of Mr. Mill’s readers only suspected the atheistic character of his writings before the appearance of his posthumous writings; but those who ever discussed matters with him clearly distinguished and appreciated his point of view. Again, the greater part of the school of philosophical Radicals is politically republican, and would probably desire to disestablish and disendow the Monarchy as much as the Church.

‘O,’ said a friend of mine when, to the best of my poor ability, I had been puzzling over certain social problems, ‘I should like to take you into the —— Club. You would pick up as much in a few hours as you would by reading books for months together.’ And my friend was right. When once you have got the right clue you are able to unravel things. You fling the flash of the lantern upon

the devious path, and get a glance at the direction-post that tells you where the path leads. There is much wise talk that perishes in the saying of it. To understand our age and its tendencies, we must not only read its literature, but listen to its converse and mark its habits.

In these times our politicians are keenly alive to the importance of going about in the world. They are thus enabled to test facts and verify conclusions. Sir Charles Dilke went all round the world, and so talks with greater authority about it. The present Earl of Derby went out to India at the time when Indian subjects were coming to the front. Mr. Forster and various other members visited Ireland when Irish subjects were foremost. Mr. Butler Johnstone told the House of Commons that he had tasted the soup in Italian prisons at the time when Italian prisons were discussed in the House. A perfect mob of public men have gone out to Turkey and Egypt to qualify themselves to speak on ‘the Eastern Question.’ In the debate on Cyprus most of the speakers seem to have gone out to Cyprus. Lord Coleridge tells us that he ran down to Arundel to examine the Duke of Norfolk’s chapel, about which he had to deliver judgment.

We lately read an account of the thorough way in which Joseph Hume qualified himself for a seat in Parliament. He visited every seaport and every manufacturing town of any importance throughout England. ‘He visited Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Egypt; he was present at the capture of Santa Anna by the English; travelled over Italy and passed some time in Malta and Sicily; and wherever he went he was actuated by the same resolve to

study the character of the people, and observe the effect of their government and laws in their moral and social welfare. Satisfying himself with no superficial observation, he carried his investigations into the lower strata of society.' Any one who has read Lord Beaconsfield's novel of *Sybil* will easily see that Disraeli himself has done exactly the same thing, and has wandered unknown through much of the rural and manufacturing regions of England.

Every traveller knows the value of going about in enabling him to verify and to realise. In these days historians of the real sort are not content to fling off their sheets in their studies, but they visit fortifications and battle-fields, in order to realise the siege or engagement. We all feel in the Lakes that we better understand Wordsworth, and in the Highlands that we understand Sir Walter. I understand Tennyson better when I know his localities—the Lincolnshire wide prospects, the noble downs of his island home, the picturesque seclusion of Hazlemere, the 'haven under the hill,' in the church of which lie the Hallams. It was a good idea of the Howitts to write of the 'homes and haunts of English poets.' I have delighted in roaming Ayrshire thinking of Burns, and seeking those haunts of sacred poets, Olney and Bemerton, and, like every true Englishman, going to Stratford-on-Avon—where, by the bye, the Shakespeare type of countenance is alone preserved—and visiting and revisiting Oxford and Cambridge. The lakes and cloisters of Newstead delight me; me 'thy forest, Windsor, and thy green retreats' delight; the long walks of Hatfield, where Elizabeth first heard that the peril of the axe was exchanged for the possession of the crown; the wild Yorkshire

moors haunted by Charlotte Brontë and her sisters; or the little village of Selborne, where gentle White watched the woods and coverts, birds, beasts, and fishes, and where one of our Christian Lord Chancellors first built a church and schools and then a pleasant country home for himself.

Then, as for the Continent. Every Englishman who has the chance runs over from Brussels to see the field of Waterloo, and this sets him seriously to study the details of the great battle. But I limit myself to home scenes, or else one might go on for ever. And Waterloo is almost a home scene; we were just fighting in Belgium a battle that otherwise might have been fought in Kent or Sussex. You must go to Paris to study the history, and to Geneva and its lake to comprehend the philosophy and the religion—or the want of religion—in France.

In going about the world, there are two places which I especially affect, and which I find more Londonish than London itself. These are Brighton and Paris. London is so vast that you cannot overtake it. Nobody pretends or is expected to do so. You do not know London; you only know certain sets in London; and as much gossip goes on in a London set as in a small provincial town. There is as much scandal in a metropolitan set as in a country village. Now the man who wants 'to go about in the world' tries to belong to as many sets as he can. Now in Brighton and Paris you meet an immense number of people. In Paris you know exactly where your English friends are to be met. There are certain houses—English, French, and American—which are great rallying places for society. You find people at Galignani's, in the

salons of the great hotel, taking drives in the Champs Elysées and the Bois, taking their ices in the open drawing-rooms of the boulevards. You see celebrated people. You meet your special friends. You are asked to join them in dinners at their hotels. You make up pleasant parties with them to visit the environs of the city. At Paris you reap some of the greatest advantages of going about. You are in the middle of everything. As all roads led to Rome, so all roads lead to Paris. It is the optic nerve of civilisation. It is the head-quarters of all travellers. It is the head office of all political action. French is still the universal language, although it is in process of being superseded by English. Whenever I stay in Paris I meet a considerable number of friends; and the friends who, from the social point of view, are best worth the meeting—those who travel furthest, see most, and talk best.

Brighton, again, is practically part of London. It is much less trouble to run from London to Brighton than to run from one part of London to another. You may be as comfortable in a Pullman car as at your club. The hotels are very good, but they are very costly. I take up my quarters at a certain club, which is more cosy than any hotel. As a member of London clubs, I join the Brighton Club without waiting to go through the usual formalities. The house is the most historic house in Brighton, the fine old mansion where Mrs. Fitzherbert lived, and which might almost be haunted by the ghost of George IV. There is a famous balcony, where, on a warm afternoon, gentlemen number largely, watching the cheerful crowds in the gardens below, and obtaining a glimpse of the

open sea. I have friends in Brighton who still remember the days of Mrs. Fitzherbert and the Prince, who recollect the old Duke of Norfolk, who was treated so shamefully, and 'the Duke'—him of Wellington—coming down on a visit to Colonel Gurwood, who destroyed himself here. I get my breakfast for a shilling at my club, 55 Old Steyne, in as good a room and with as good servants as when I used to put up at the biggest of hotels, and pay bills correspondingly big. Brighton has a centre, and this neighbourhood is its centre. Close by is the Pavilion and Dome. Thackeray wanted to give his lectures at the Pavilion on the Four Georges; but the then Mayor of Brighton, a much more sensible man than mayors generally are, said that he could not have the poor dead George IV. abused under his own roof. Once a year, in February, I regularly come down for Mr. Kuhe's musical festival. You meet great singers and composers. You hear a large amount of original music. You meet your friends, kinsfolk, and acquaintances to any extent you like. Please to observe the carpet gardening in the grounds of the Pavilion. They bring it to high perfection here, and also at Cliftonville. Then just opposite my club is the Aquarium. Scientific people tell me that the science of ichthyology may be studied here with the greatest advantage. Now and then I study it myself. If people must take up an ology, ichthyology is as good as any other. When there is an enormous sturgeon, or a fish that mimics the mermaid, like the Manatee, then a crowd of people gather for what may be charitably considered a scientific purpose. Otherwise, it is a large miscellaneous gather-

ing and promenade, to hear music and to see one another. Of course those delightful lounges the piers—the new pier is the fashionable one, but the old is by far the most interesting structure—are best in the summer; but the Aquarium is the acknowledged winter substitute, and the management works hard and skilfully to sustain and extend the attractions.

Brighton is not to be commended to pedestrians. It is a day's march before you fairly get into the country. The only plan is to go to some railway station, and thence explore the manners and customs, or the want of them, of the bucolic neighbourhood, that *Bœotia* of England. But the country is infinitely delightful for equestrians. That range of downs extends for seventy miles, from Eastbourne far into Hampshire. The thymy turf springs elastic to the horse's hoofs, and the mountain air is blended with the iodine and ozone of the sea atmosphere. As one goes about one often picks up a narrative which may illustrate a morality. For instance, among other bits of social morality, one sees from time to time how a grasping disposition may overreach itself. Again and again I have passed a big house that has been empty for a long time. The tenant has made improvements, and then the landlord has raised the rent. The old tenant has been turned out, but the new tenant does not come forward. The tenant pays a hundred a year, and the landlord suddenly thinks that he must have a hundred and fifty, which the tenant repudiates. It is manifest that if the house lies empty for a couple of years it is long before the higher rent makes up for the void time, and even then the higher rent is not often obtained. The other day the landlord came down to see a friend of

mine, his yearly tenant. My simple-minded friend had improved the place, turned the waste into a garden, repaired and beautified the whole. Then, with Hezekiah-like simplicity of character, he displayed all his treasures to his landlord. The landlord surveys all the improvements, and as soon as he gets home sends a letter nearly doubling the rent. I could not help hoping that this man's house might stand empty for long.

There was a man who discovered an improvement in candles. The idea was, I think, a metallic wick, by which certain economies might be effected. It was a good and practicable idea, and a large firm made him a very handsome offer for his invention. But the man demanded ridiculously high terms, so high that prices must be raised or profits foregone. So the bargain broke off on a question of terms. But the business men possessed a great deal of skill and inventive power themselves, and found no difficulty in obtaining contrivances which effected the same objects as the invention, which practically became superseded. The inventor had irreparably injured himself by being too exacting. That was a wise old Greek proverb which declared that the half is greater than the whole. It is not wise to insist on the full letter or full extent of our rights. The man who spends everything upon himself would generally be a richer man if he gave some of it away. A liberal spirit of concession has saved many endangered rights, and promoted peace and prosperity.

Some curious incidents have happened as people go about in the world. One day, many years ago, an architect entered Chichester Cathedral. It was well known that the old spire was in a dilapidated and even a threaten-

ing state. But people, who knew that it had lasted so long, thought that it might last a little longer. This architect, who had accidentally strolled into the cathedral, came to the conclusion *that the spire would fall in about a quarter of an hour*. He succeeded in inducing people to withdraw from any possible danger, and in a quarter of an hour the spire fell. A somewhat similar story, but by no means so fortunate in the issue, is told on incontestable authority respecting the elder Stephenson. He was walking with a friend along the chain bridge suspended over the river Dordonne. Stephenson insisted on recrossing it. He walked very slowly with his head bent down, as if listening to and pondering over every step he took. At last he said, 'The bridge is unsafe, and will give way at the first heavy trial it meets with.' He thought it his duty to call on the French Maire, who received him very politely, and dismissed him with a shrug. In vain Stephenson gesticulated violently and began to draw diagrams; M. le Maire had every confidence in the engineer who had built the bridge. Only a few months later a regiment of soldiers had to march across this very bridge. They did so with a heavy tramp, without breaking step. Suddenly the bridge gave way; scores of men, hurled into the rapid eddies below, were swept away and drowned before any means of rescue could reach them.

It is not to be disguised also that in much travelling about there is a certain element of personal risk, although this is reduced to a minimum in these days, when travelling is made pleasant and easy. I suppose there is always a percentage of risk, however small, but it is on

these terms that we hold life. We hear of many accidents, but there are also very many of which we do not hear, and both united are as nothing compared with those from which we have hair-breadth escapes. 'My life,' says Sir Thomas Brown, of Norwich, 'is not a life, but a prolonged miracle of thirty years.' Most people who go about a great deal have their stories to tell of perils of road and rail and river. This element of accident is no matter of chance, but was doubtless designed as a sharp condiment to human life.

I remember one very absurd thing that happened to a man while 'going about in the world.' One day a commercial traveller got into a carriage, in which he found a gentleman was sitting. The two exchanged glances, as is the manner of fellow travellers. Indeed, our 'Commercial' found a very steady gaze constantly fixed upon him. From looks they proceeded to words, and in course of time there was much animated conversation. The destination of the travellers was a great northern town, and for several hours our two travellers showed all the mutual amenities possible on a railway journey. As they neared the great station, the squire—for so he might properly be termed—said to the Commercial, 'Where do you happen to be putting up in this place?'

'At the Royal George,' was the reply.

'Now look here, my friend,' said the Squire. 'I live at rather a pretty place a few miles out of the town. I have rather a nice wife, and some pretty children. We have got on very well together; just get into my dogcart; it is sure to be waiting at the station. I will drive you over with me, we will put you up for the night,

and I can bring you in any time you like to morrow morning.

The Commercial Traveller thought that he was in for a good thing, and very readily consented. Matters turned out precisely as his new-found friend had said. Past a pleasant lodge and a shady avenue, the dogcart rolled up to a portico, where there was a charming young wife waiting, with a child in each hand, for her husband. A kindly welcome was extended to the stranger. There was a capital dinner and a delightful bed-chamber, and our traveller thought with justice that he had dropped into a very good thing.

The following morning the Squire drove his guest back again into the town, as far as the railway station. The two paced the platform for some little time, waiting for the train.

'I am sure I am very much obliged to you for your great and unexpected and amazing hospitality. 'Pon my honour, never met so much kindness in all my life,' said the Commercial. 'May I ask you what induced you to ask me to come and stay with you? Perhaps,' he added with an air of modest assurance, 'there was something in my style of conversation which took your fancy.'

'Do you really wish particularly to know?' asked the Squire.

'I do indeed.'

'In that case, my dear fellow,' said the Squire, but not without embarrassment, 'I will tell you. I really should not have thought of mentioning it if you had not named it so particularly. But during the four or five years of my married life, my wife, who is a very nice-looking little party herself—'

'Precisely so, precisely so,' murmured the Commercial in a tone of great appreciation.

'Has always persisted in telling me that I am the ugliest man she has ever seen in all her life. To my own mind, I have always thought that there was some truth in her remark. But it so happened that directly you entered the railway carriage and I fixed my eye upon you, I mentally exclaimed, "Why, here is an uglier man than I am!" It instantly occurred to me that I must carry you to my place for my wife to look at you.'

'Really, upon my honour,' quoth the Commercial.

'Yes, indeed,' said the Squire, not without a little shyness. 'And we are both agreed that, so far as we have gone, you are by far the ugliest man that we have ever seen. And I am sure that I am very much obliged to you for abolishing my wife's injurious criticism.'

What answer the Commercial Traveller made the story does not tell. I am reminded of that other story of a bagman, better known, and also, I believe, authentic.

This Commercial was travelling in the north of Scotland with two great nobles, who were intent on shooting. We shall not greatly err if we call them the Duke of A. and the Duke of B.

The Duke of A. is an intensely 'conversational' man, totally devoid of self-consciousness, and ready to receive or pour out information to any extent. The Duke of B. is very good-hearted, but by no means equally given to converse.

When the train stopped at a refreshment station the Duke of A. got out to partake, according to his fashion, of ginger beer, and the other two remained in the carriage.

'Now, what might be the name of your friend?' asked the bagman of the Duke.

'Don't you know him?' was the reply. 'Why, I thought everybody knew him. That's the Duke of A.'

The man was thunderstruck.

'By Jove!' he exclaimed. 'And only think of his being so free and affable to *two snobs like you and me*.'

One other story which I picked up while going about in the world.

There is a certain author, a good and clever man, but with a great deal of nonsense and pretentiousness about him. He is not only a writer and a thinker, but a man of the world, and a great observer of the *convenances* of society. If he has a weakness, it is that, like Tom Moore, he loves a lord.

One day this gentleman met on board a Clyde steamer a young gentleman with whom he entered into conversation, and with whose talk he was greatly pleased. So much so indeed that, ascertaining that he was going on to the great town to which he himself was bound, he begged him to come and dine. A gratified assent was immediately given. At eight o'clock the young traveller presented himself; but, alas, in the same homely suit of tweed which he had worn when on the steamer. The polite author's face fell as it contemplated the fact. He was greatly shocked. He hastened to explain that his wife was very particular, and was obliged to maintain the rules of society, and he greatly regretted that his wife would not be able to receive him at dinner as he was not in customary evening dress. The stranger courteously explained that he was travelling, that he had not been able to keep his luggage together, and that it was necessity, and not negligence or want of proper respect, that caused him to present

himself in morning attire. The illustrious author was, however, inexorable, and said he felt sure that his wife would not wish to receive to dinner any one who was not in evening dress. The stranger immediately rose to withdraw, and begged to be allowed to leave his card, with an expression of regret to the lady whose feelings he had been so near unintentionally outraging. It was the card of the great Earl of —, a nobleman whom, beyond all others, he and the lady would have liked to have known!

Society is all very well; but it is quite possible to push its claims to an exaggerated excess.

I think it will be found that we make nearly all the friends we have while going about the world. The friendships and loves of humanity are consolidated in the shifting of places and the tossing to and fro of individuals. There are no changes so beneficial and fertile in results as when we are brought into contact with higher natures than our own, and obtain glimpses of hitherto undiscovered worlds of thought and endeavour.

Thus by 'going about in the world' one sees this man or that, who otherwise might be a myth, or a lay figure, or a *Vox et præterea nihil*. I am always glad to think that I have had a talk with some of the historians—with Macaulay, with Alison, with Froude. I remember the great Arctic sailors whom I have met; how I was privileged to spend with Livingstone one of his last evenings in England; that I have listened for mornings together to the wonderful monologues of Professor Morley, have met Pusey and Liddon and Lightfoot. I remember bright mornings with poets, cheerful dinners at the high tables of colleges, with

men whose notice was distinction. I remember with pleasure how I have met the great advocate, the great judge, the great bishop, the great author.

When you meet a traveller you ask him for the details which he omitted in his work, or you can ask the thinker to clear up some difficulty in his reasonings. If you put any question in correspondence to such men, it is wonderful how kind and courteous they will be in helping one's uncertainties. I have met wise and great ladies, whom it is 'a liberal education to know.' I am only an ordinary man, and do not profess to know great people; but still, according to the measure

of my power, I 'go about in the world,' and cannot help stumbling against many people who freshen one up and do one good.

And I can declare that I look onwards to eternity itself, not to going about in the world, but going about in the universe. 'Two things fill me with awe,' says Kant, 'the starry heavens and the sense of human responsibility.' Space is commensurate with eternity—a new idea in philosophy is that they are the same thing—and the employment of immortality will be the growth of knowledge, the expansion of power, the flight from star to star and from system to system. While we 'go on' we shall always be 'going about.'

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

XII.

THE FORE-STREET COMPANY: MORRISON, DILLON, & CO.

THAT block of buildings in Fore-street, the most imposing in the street, and extending over an acre of ground, has an extremely interesting history attached to it. The firm was once represented by an estimable gentleman, Mr. Todd; it then passed into the hands of Morrison, Dillon, & Co., and about five years after the death of the late Mr. Morrison it passed into the hands of the present Fore-street Company. The large and complicated monetary affairs of the Morrison clan are now transacted in a different edifice and by another staff of officials. But their name will always be identified with the great business house in Fore-street. In our industrial history that house will always be identified with the dry-goods' business. But its great monetary hero is doubtless the late Mr. James Morrison, whose career affords one of the most marvellous biographies of modern mercantile life.

The life of Mr. Morrison would be extremely well worth the telling by such a writer as Dr. Smiles. He would be a true hero for an industrial biography. That career may now be very rapidly given. James Morrison was a Scotchman by descent. His more immediate 'forbears' came from Islay on the west coast of Scotland. In after years he purchased an immense estate in Islay—it was bounded by some twenty-three miles of shore—and paid some 450,000*l.* for it. This property he made

over in his lifetime to his eldest son Charles Morrison. He himself was born in Hampshire, of yeoman parentage. Of his father we know nothing. Of his mother he often spoke; a woman of that high order of native worth whose name is blessed by her children, whose character and career she helped to form. Mr. Morrison used to speak of the extreme scantiness of his resources when first he threw himself upon the business world of London. He really was one of a scanty band of great capitalists who began life on sums varying from half-a-crown to a ten-pound note. By and by he got into the business firm of the late Mr. Todd. Like that famous apprentice who married his master's daughter and became Lord Mayor of London, James Morrison married his employer's daughter and became his employer's partner. He did not arrive at the stereotyped culmination of a mercantile career in becoming Lord Mayor, but he obtained a position which any Lord Mayor might desire to occupy. 'Our' Mr. Dillon, who had been nearly all his life in the business, also became a partner. Then, in the next generation, Mr. Todd went out of the business. More even than the late George Moore, he became the Napoleon of commerce. A great merchant is like a great general. He must see or make his opportunity. He must be capable of massing his resources, of making some strong

and sudden *coup*, of acting upon an energetic will and individual responsibility. Mr. Morrison often, at a moment's notice, would have to write a cheque for fifty thousands. We have heard on one occasion of his writing a cheque for half a million. By his own personal genius in business he indefinitely expanded the fame and connection of his firm.

It has been said that the secret of Mr. Morrison's success in business lies on the surface. He was content with swift returns and small profits. He did not believe in the old plan of always exacting the highest prices which could be obtained. His principle was the substitution of the lowest remunerative scale of profit and the rapid circulation of capital. Other houses of business have followed this plan, but Mr. Morrison certainly led the way, and even in the region of trade showed a large amount of intellectual originality. He developed his theory all round. He had the power of applying his theories to the multiplicity of details which mark the statesman and the generalissimo. After a time, he was neither so constantly on the spot nor so thoroughly busied in the complications and calculations of trade. One other power was especially possessed by Mr. Morrison, that is, the power of organisation, mainly developed from the successful reading of character and the power of selecting the best kind of subordinates. It is impossible for a business man to work in a large way unless he can get the business tools to work with. Whether a man is faithfully served or not is all the difference between the making and the marring of a fortune. One day the present writer was discussing this subject with the head of a firm employing some thousands of hands. Said the great em-

ployer, 'The first thing you want is honesty. The second is ability. Either is very good. It is the combination of the two which gives you your sheet anchor.' It is only in such a combination that the young men who now press into commerce can hope for ultimate success. Those who are at the head of the present Fore-street Company are men who have thus passed through various grades into the highest positions. Morrison's *forte* was his power of dealing with men, quite as much as his power of dealing with goods. He was somewhat intimately connected with the late Mr. J. D. Hill, Recorder of Birmingham. After his friend's decease Mr. Hill summed up his impressions relating to his career in the *Spectator*, towards the end of 1858. He claims for his friend another intellectual gift which he thinks went far to make his success in life. Mr. Hill says: 'Perhaps one of the most potent causes of Mr. Morrison's success in life was the sagacity and sound judgment with which he assigned proper limits to the division of labour. It seems inseparable from our progress in modern sciences, like that of political economy, that great truths, after having been resisted with obstinate bigotry for long periods—sometimes for ages—should with equal bigotry be held as of universal application, so soon as they become generally admitted. It has been thus with the principle of division of labour—resisted by those who were totally ignorant of the subject—misapplied by sciolists who only half understand the doctrine. Hence nearly as much business has been done by a false division of labour as by no division at all. James Morrison was no sciolist, and he never split on such a rock.'

Of course Mr. Morrison sought

to become a member of Parliament. This is now the popular decoration for wealth. When a man has won a great fortune, he considers that he has a stake in the country, and ought to be returned to Parliament to represent his own wealth. In this way the House of Commons has become the Chamber of Mediocrity, and threatens at no distant date to be degraded to the level of a parish vestry. There is now no opening for men who have studied the science of history and politics, and have devoted themselves to the career of politics and statesmanship. The country must eventually be the poorer for the loss of a class which has produced a Canning, a Peel, and a Gladstone. It is to the credit of Mr. Morrison that he performed modest useful legislative service, in harmony with his own character and the position which he filled. For his seat Mr. Morrison went to the ends of the earth. He first went to Cornwall. People with money who wanted seats in Parliament often went to Cornwall. There were sufficient rotten boroughs to return fifty members to Parliament. Large landholders used to split up their property into any number of small farms in order to multiply votes. Thus it happens that nearly throughout Cornwall the farmers have such small holdings. Mr. Morrison offered himself for the fishing town of St. Ives, with its noble bay and ignoble odours, to represent the great pilchard interest. To the present day St. Ives is an object of immense affection to men with a large fortune and a good political cry. Mr. Morrison was returned; but as a Liberal he thought it his duty to support Schedule B, which disfranchised St. Ives to the extent of depriving it of one of its

members. He did not think it wise to expose himself to the revenge of a constituency which would of course consider itself betrayed and insulted by his vote. After several experiments in electioneering, he betook himself to the north of Scotland. He became member for Inverness; and, what would give a peculiar charm to this connection, it was from Inverness that his own family had come before they made their lucky raid southwards.

It was as member of Parliament that Mr. Morrison was of the greatest service to the country in the matter of railways. The railway legislation of this country is simply a national disgrace. Without going so far as to say that a wise statesmanship would have made the railways a Government undertaking, the Government could at least have controlled the railway system to the extent of systematising it, preventing waste, confusion, and needless competition, and protecting the rights of the public. The Railway Mania of 1845, both on its tragic side and its comic side, ought never to have been allowed to happen. What happened before that 30th of November, when the plans had to be deposited, will never be forgotten in the industrial annals of this country. Let us take a citation from Mr. F. H. Grundy's *Pictures of the Past*. Mr. Grundy was intimately connected with the late George Stephenson. 'If your Lockes, Stephensons, Vignolles, Brunels, &c., were paid fortunes, they did their best for their employers, and knew how to do it. But men who had never seen a railway—save, indeed, a passing train—schoolmasters who could not make a living; clerks who knew a bit of Euclid; clergymen even who had perhaps taken a B.A.,—all became heaven-born

civil engineers. I have met men at that time out in the field, employed with the getting up of a great work, who could not "set" a level. I met one who wanted to know what a gradient was; another who did not know what a "sleeper" was. The result necessarily following was disastrous. After thousands on thousands of pounds had been thrown away, the work of such men was frequently found to be absolutely useless. The pace was sadly overtaking, morally and physically. I could tell sad stories of the after effect, including insanity and death.' Mr. Grundy has, however, limited himself to what we may call the byplay of the evil. The main evils were the disastrous speculations, rivalling the South Sea Bubble in ruinous effects, and the total neglect of the public interests by the competing promoters.

To redress at least the latter evil Morrison strove strenuously, and, to a considerable extent, successfully. He made various brief practical speeches, which did not fail to impress the House with his honesty and ability. In March 1846, just after that critical division which threw Sir Robert Peel out of office, he obtained a select committee for inquiring into the best method for securing the interest of the public in railways. We may say that Mr. Morrison's speeches were collected and published by the Messrs. Longman in 1848. No less an authority than Mr. MacCulloch speaks in the highest terms of Mr. Morrison's exertions in economical science. If all our business members could perform the like business services to the country there would not be the same necessity for fearing a predominance of the Philistine element in the House of Commons. One only of Mr. Morrison's sons, Mr. Walter Mor-

ison, has been a member of the House of Commons. He lost his seat at Plymouth at the last election; but is able to console himself in his beautiful retreat near the Malham Rocks in Yorkshire.

Mr. Morrison was one of the great supporters of the University of London. If it had not been for himself and other high-minded men, University College in Gower-street, the offspring and representative of the University of London, might never have raised its stately presence. Though Mr. Morrison never had a regular education, he had studied art most thoroughly, and this art education was, in its way, a refining influence and a thorough education. He travelled a great deal in the course of his business—must repeatedly have travelled over Europe—and this was in itself an education beyond the special line of his own pursuits. He found that in every country of Europe the cost of weaving any textile fabric, measured by the square yard, was very much the same in one country as in another, and that the Englishman was only better paid than the Italian, German, and Frenchmen, in proportion as his labour was more productive than theirs.

The financial career of Mr. Morrison is, however, very imperfectly understood in relation to the Fore-street business alone. After he has made his immense gains the question arises, 'What will he do with it?' Many a man who has made enormous sums in his business has been singularly unfortunate in his investments. The fortunes which seem so vast are often, in point of fact, very moderate. The fortune left by the late Mr. Brassey, for instance, though it was that of a millionaire, was only some three or four per cent on the immense sums

which passed through his hands. The news will sound strange to some persons, but it is nevertheless true, that Mr. Morrison's gains as an investor were by no means so large and genuine as in his business. The American securities, we imagine, were by no means so secure as were imagined. In fact, he dropped one or two millions in his investments; but he also gained two or three millions, leaving some million or two to the good from speculative investments, to swell the enormous total which he left behind him. His largest and, we may say, his best investments were all made in land. The limits of soil are inexorably fixed, and as a nation increases in riches the soil is sure to rise in value. He purchased large estates in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire, Glamorganshire, in Scotland, and in America. One of his seats was Basildon House, near one of the most beautiful reaches of the river Thames, close to the wildest heaths of Berkshire, and not very far from that lovely group of the Burnham beeches which have so narrowly escaped the axe, and have lately been secured for the nation. Here he passed his declining years, and here he died. Another seat was the famous Fonthill Abbey, in Wiltshire. This was originally Beckford's creation. Relays of workmen were employed without cessation, and its tower rose through torchlight in the night time. 'And thou too, Vathek, England's wealthiest son,' wrote Byron, apostrophising Beckford. The phrase would better suit Mr. Morrison, whose resources were inexhaustible, than Beckford, whose resources were eventually exhausted. Besides *Vathek*, Beckford wrote his great work *Anastasis*, eminently deserving of being read at the present day for

its inimitable portraiture of the Turk, the Greek, and the Egyptian. Few country houses have such a remarkable history as Fonthill Abbey. It has gone through all kinds of vicissitudes since its first erection, about the time of the Conquest—having repeatedly fallen 'a victim to the flames.' The third edifice, which was built at the cost of a quarter of a million, by Alderman Beckford, was sold by his son, because he disliked the dampness of the site, for 9000*l*. This son 'Vathek' erected a new building, the famous Abbey, on a new site at the cost of another quarter of a million. In 1825 the Abbey and its contents were sold for 290,000*l*. to Mr. Farquhar. But on the shortest day of that unlucky year, 1825, the famous tower fell down, the commencement of the process of destruction. When Beckford heard of it he is reported to have said: 'Well, it has shown more civility to Mr. Farquhar than it ever did to me. He has had it but one year. I had it for twenty-seven, and during all that time it neither bowed nor curtsied.' Mr. Farquhar did not care for the place, and even built a cloth-mill on the margin of the lake. There was the greatest excitement all over the country when Fonthill was put up for sale. For Beckford had jealously excluded the public from his territory, and from the rich art treasures of his palace. He had enclosed the park with a most formidable wall six miles in circuit. This was built with the impartial object of excluding both sportsmen and poachers. 'I never suffer an animal to be killed,' said Beckford, 'but through necessity. In early life I gave up shooting because I consider that we have no right to murder animals for sport. I am fond of animals. The birds in the plan-

tations seem to know me. They continued their song as I rode close to them; the very hares grew bold. It was exactly as I wished.' Once he met a bevy of huntsmen going over his land; he went straight home and wrote a notice to a contractor to build a wall all round the park twelve feet high, with *chevaux de frise*. The only occasion on which the park had been thrown open was when he attained his majority. Then 30,000 lamps were hung in the grounds, and seven hundred people were feasted on oxen and sheep roasted whole. For many years the Abbey, built by Wyatt and furnished by Beckford, continued a solitary ruin in the midst of the Wiltshire woods. The property was then sold, and came into the possession of the Marquis of Westminster and Morrison the *millionaire*. It belongs at present to Mr. Alfred Morrison. We will venture to say that Beckford's anti-game views, which would delight Mr. Freeman, do not appertain to the present possessors of the Abbey and its woods.

In the second volume of Dr. Waagen's *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, three pages are occupied by the description of pictures in Mr. Morrison's house in Upper Harley-street. Dr. Waagen, however, came apparently to the opinion that he had not done this collection justice, for in his fourth and supplementary volume he adds seven or eight pages to the subject. These comprise pictures by Claude Lorraine, Rubens, Titian, Greuze, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Vandyke, Cuyp, Teniers, and Poussin. The whole descriptive list is well worth studying by art students. Dr. Waagen is particularly struck by a quiet touching picture of Jan Steen's, 'Saying Grace,' a great contrast to the usual manner of this 'up-

roarious' master. Dr. Waagen not only speaks of pictures, but of other art-treasures. These pictures and curiosities are not only found in Harley-street, but in all the houses belonging to members of the affluent house of Morrison. Perhaps the richest collection of all is that belonging to Mr. Alfred Morrison (the owner of Fonthill) in Carlton-terrace. This gentleman has an enthusiasm for the fine arts, and thinks no amount of trouble and expense lost that adds to the treasures of his home.

The remarkable taste for art exhibited by Mr. Morrison was fully shared by the late Mr. Dillon, a partner of the firm. His pictures, which were bought for 40,000*l.*, were sold for something like 100,000*l.* The Morrison pictures never came into the market, or they would have realised a much larger sum. The fame of Mr. Dillon and of Mr. Morrison was that of *connoisseurs* of the highest eminence. No doubt both these gentlemen acquired a considerable amount of artistic knowledge, but it is no secret that both gentlemen were greatly indebted to the late Mr. Holloway, whose exquisite taste and prolonged experience eminently fitted him to form a gallery for millionaires. A knowledge of pictures hardly comes by the light of Nature. James Morrison had his taste and his collection alike formed by the enlightened Italian with the English name.

The enormous wealth of a great capitalist is always a subject which inflames the imagination of journalists and romancists. This was especially the case with M. Dumas and M. Balzac. Dumas is never so happy as when producing scenic effects through the boundless resources of a Cagliostro or Count of Monte Cristo. Balzac's whole life

until his short-lived union with his Polish countess was a struggle for money, and therefore money played a predominant part through all his works of imagination. Two English novelists have traced a career like Mr. Morrison's, and one portraiture was manifestly designed for Mr. Morrison. Mr. Dickens, for instance, in one of his novels introduces the great capitalist who employs so many thousand hands and spends so many thousand pounds. Mr. Charles Reade, in his novel of *Hard Cash*, goes still further. He makes the elder Hardy when he was rolling in wealth labour under the hallucination that he was a very poor man. He would surreptitiously hold out his hand for a shilling. He would bind his family to pay him a pound a week, and believe that this was his only subsistence. It is no secret that a hallucination of this kind was far and wide attributed to Mr. Morrison. Nor would it be anything surprising, in the case of any wise and upright man of business, in the event of cerebral disease, if such a delusion arose, and it would not be fair to gather any unfavourable impression from the circumstance. But such rumours have been very greatly magnified, and it would be hard to discover any real basis for them. If there were any such circumstances they have been greatly exaggerated.

Mr. Morrison died on the 30th of October 1857.

A few words may be said of the present Morrison family. The direct representative of the firm is Mr. Charles Morrison, of Harley-street, to whom descended the largest part of a rich inheritance. He is as wealthy and, to many people, as interesting as his father. He has the reputation of wide reading, great eccentricity, and

much benevolence. A quiet, unostentatious bachelor, it is understood that his accumulations are of a really extraordinary kind. We have seen his name down for a ten-thousand-pound subscription to the Bishop of London's Fund, subsequently enlarged to 15,000*l.*; and he came vigorously to the assistance of 'Londoners over the Border.' Mr. Morrison, however, is not the kind of man to allow his right hand to know what his left hand doeth. With the habits of a student, he partakes of the inherited business capacity. He has shown himself an active member of various boards of directors. Nor is this all. He has entered the ranks of authorship, and with a degree of success which would justify a renewed appearance in the ranks of literary men.

The claim has been put forth on behalf of his father that his whole business was conducted on high philosophical and economical principles. The notion has been strengthened through a work published by Mr. Charles Morrison on *Labour and Capital*, in which he seems to express a favourable view of limited partnerships and coöperation, and to discern better prospects for the great mass of the labouring multitude. Mr. Charles Morrison, in a letter to Mr. Davenport Hill, the Recorder of Birmingham, modestly expressed an opinion that his letter was incomplete, and said that circumstances had permitted him only to indicate and not to develop his doctrines. Mr. Hill writes to him: 'Speaking from the recollections of many years ago, I should say that your own establishment at Fore-street was an example of what I mean. That of the Ransoms of Ipswich, of Salt at Saltaire, of the Chances at Smethwick, of Winfield at Birmingham, furnish instances, some more,

some less complete. Here, then, if I am right, is a function for the employer at once disclosed, which casts upon him a most solemn duty and a most enviable privilege.' The book on Capital and Labour is closely argued, and seems to show an intimate acquaintance with the writings of the late Mr. Mill. Communism appears to be an idea which has greatly haunted the mind of Mr. Charles Morrison. He does not think that the subject will ever come to the front in our own time. At the outside, he thinks that Communism will resolve itself in practice to the establishment of very numerous partnerships. Socialism, however, is just one of those questions, burning and fateful, which may sleep on for generations, or which may suddenly awake into awful energy. We question whether the great capitalists and millionaires have thoroughly appreciated the modicum of underlying truth which is to be detected in these doctrines. If, like the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, we could continue our slumbers for centuries, we might behold astonishing settlements of questions which are now only in their infancy. In this country nearly all great social conflicts have been settled; and our thinkers are almost at a loss to know where the great conflicts of the future may arise. Still, the more far-sighted think that the labour question may earlier emerge for solution than is generally supposed. A book that ought to be compared is one written by the Comte de Paris, on Labour and Strikes. Now that there is no heir for the Legitimists, and the Prince will combine the Bourbon and Orleansist claims; now that the Napoleonic claim has become practically extinct, it is possible that France, after a hundred years of wander-

ing and revolution, will return to the sovereigns of the ancient line. It is curious to find the illustrious prince and the modern millionaire discussing the social problems connected with labour and property. But we are not sure that they have arrived at the true way of settlement. That question is not to be settled by an infinitesimal minority of poor people getting a share in their business. In fact, such co-partnership has been offered to, and refused by, colliers and manufacturing labourers. It is binding the strong man with withes of grass. The point is to prevent the country resolving itself, according to Lord Beaconsfield's phrase, into two nations—the rich and the poor. There is a Christian Socialism as well as a heathen Socialism. It is when the rich feel that the tie of brotherhood is beyond all artificial distinction, when they recognise the law of doing good and showing mercy, when they hold themselves the trustees of the wealth they enjoy, that princes and millionaires obtain real securities for themselves. Otherwise the quarrel between the rich and poor is ultimately settled, not by arguments, but by blows.

Mr. Morrison left many other children. His will, quite a curiosity in its way, extends over forty folio pages, and shows careful regard to every individual. The children enumerated are Charles, Alfred, George, Frank, Walter, Allan, Lucy, Mary, Ellen; those at least. Mr. Morrison had been one of the largest purchasers of land in the country, and his bequests of land, apart from previous immense settlements, on which no duty would be paid, were enormous. There were also heavy bequests in American securities, principally of the Liberties of the City of Philadelphia.

The present Fore-street Company is conducted to a great extent on the same lines as that of Morrison, Dillon, & Co.; but in some degree it has been materially modified in passing from the hands of an individual into that of a society. In some respects it maintains a preëminence over most other firms. It does not solicit business; it quietly waits for it. It shows none of that sumptuous hospitality towards customers which makes such an immense item in the affairs of many firms. It never advertises. It never employs travellers. It maintains a large staff of buyers with salaries from five hundred to over two thousand a year. Its buildings are the most striking and largest in Fore-street. It may be mentioned that Mr. Whiteley of Westbourne-grove acquired his experience and made his mark in Fore-street. In many respects the entire style of things has changed very much from the time of Messrs. Morrison & Dillon. A company with a distributed responsibility, and a board of directors responsible to a constituency of shareholders, cannot act in the decisive irresponsible manner that marks a proprietor. Still, the Fore-street Company promulgate very satisfactory dividends—fifteen per cent on one occasion. The Morrisons retain a large interest in the business. Mr. Allan Morrison is one of the board of directors. Although the great days of the firm are over, there are still many interests which demonstrate the skill and energy of the conductors. For instance, there was a time in the Franco-German war when the silk mills of Lyons absolutely failed to produce. The workmen could not, or would not, work; most probably they were wanted for the forced levies. There was a certain

amount of silk to be sold off, a great bargain. It was to be bought for ready money only. On the very day that the Fore-street Company heard of this, a messenger was despatched through a country disturbed by war with fifty thousand pounds in gold. The mission was successful, and the results most satisfactory.

In various respects there are strong lines of difference between a limited liability company and a business guided by a single brain and heart. All through these City houses, between the date of Mr. Morrison and the date of the Fore-street Company, the electric telegraph alone has been an instrument of immense change. Business is much more equably distributed throughout the year. No doubt there is greater activity in the spring and autumn; but formerly at one time there would be comparatively little to do, and at another time there would be an immense crush. The hours are different. Hogarth's type of the industrious apprentice is almost as extinct as the Dodo. Our industrious apprentice used to present himself at his master's door at seven in the morning, take down the shutters, clean out the shop, stay till late at night, be thoroughly unsparing of himself, and thoroughly identify himself with his master's interests. A great deal of this is reversed. The shopman now comes at a later hour and goes away at an earlier.

It seems to us that a change in some respects has come over the City of London, so far as its business young men are concerned. We do not now often meet with the pretty prose poem of the young man who marries his master's daughter and becomes his partner. These are the days of bars and bodegas, of music-halls and theatres, and the

old homespun virtues are unfortunately a little out of fashion. The young men of the old school used to begin their work at seven in the morning; they closed at nine; they identified their own interests with their employers'; they strove for their smile and sympathy. The change that exists between the personal *rôle* of James Morrison and the working of a company seems typical of a great change in the social life of the City of London. The indifference to hard persistent work has reached our clerkly youth; perhaps also something of the *doctrinaire* philosophy of abbreviating toil and aiming at personal enjoyment. He has somewhat altered in his ways. He seeks his own interests before he regards the interests of any one else. He declines to do any more work than he has bargained for. There is a great deal of truth and reason in this. It is difficult to conceive of a clerk or shopman lashing himself into a state of enthusiasm on behalf of a limited liability association. You cannot give that loyal feudal service to a society which many men have been proud to render to the great chiefs of trade. At the same time, we fear that there is a great deal that is restless and unsatisfactory in the younger commercial life—a want of stability, a want of sincerity, a want of *temperance* both in food

and drink. We think of Shakespeare's lines:

'O good old man, how well in thee
appears

The constant service of the antique
world!

When service sweat for duty, not for
need.

Thou art not for the fashion of these
times.'

The old system has certainly changed, and it has carried with it the loss of a certain stability and devotedness which was once characteristic of English people, and helped to build up English commerce.

It is hardly necessary to say that the Fore-street Company exhibit every kindly attention to the many young men whom they have in their employ. Besides the library- and reading-room, they have billiard- and smoking-rooms. Every effort is made to lighten the monotony of toil, and to save young men from the temptations of a great city. Happily all this kindness and consideration has ceased to be characteristic of any single firm exclusively. It will be seen that the great Fore-street house has a history of its own and its own high traditions to maintain. It holds its own high position in a city 'whose merchants are princes, and its traffickers the honourable of the earth.' It will always treasure the memory of the grand old man who was the architect of its fortunes and his own.

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER XXXII.

DOWN THE RIVER.

Down in Pensand Combe the tide was high, and Matthew Fenner's boat lay at the landing-place. He sat idly on a log with one or two of his friends, waiting for Mr. Northcote, who was much longer than he had led his boatman to expect. It was a good deal after five o'clock; the wind had gone down completely, and all the upper part of the sky was covered with gray clouds; under them long bright rays shot out from a wild yellow sunset. The weather-wise boatman looked at the sky and the water, felt the sudden stillness of the air, and prophesied a gale.

At last Dick Northcote came down the lane from the Castle gates, with Miss Mabel Ashley on one arm, and carrying on the other a heap of shawls and rugs. Matthew got up, and strode to his boat. He had not expected this addition to the freight; but he showed no surprise. Dick packed his companion into the stern with the greatest care, and in another minute they were gliding away down the Combe; and Mabel felt that she was free of Pensand for ever. This did not rouse in her any great joy or even cheerfulness; she looked pale and grave as she sat there, with her eyes lifted to the old trees and battlements bathed in sunset. It may have been a little regret and affection for the old General, for the rose-glades where she had

walked with Anthony; and Mabel had sentiment enough in her nature to feel the solemnity of leaving a separate portion of one's life behind. Things can never be again what they were; the past is loosening its hold, and there is some anxiety, however happy the circumstances, in trusting oneself to the hands of that unknown Future stretched out to one from the dimness. But in the midst of her grave thoughts Mabel looked at Dick and smiled.

If he was the future, then there was nothing terrible in it, nothing but a strong loving faithfulness; thus, after all, looking forward was better than looking back.

The sun disappeared just as they reached the mouth of the Combe; the Penyr was a sea of dancing gold, on which the boat rocked almost alarmingly. The currents were strong that evening, for a swell had been setting in from the bay; the water was all life and movement, while not a leaf stirred in the woods, lying purple and deep along the shore, and against the gloomy sky, with its faint polish of gold, every twig and bramble upon the banks hung motionless. The yellow light faded, the dark clouds settled down, and twilight seemed to be coming on suddenly.

'What about the weather, Fenner?' said Dick, as they flew along through the small splashing waves, the topaz shower from the oars less dazzling every moment.

'A gale afore morning, sir,'

said the boatman. 'Never saw a windier sunset.'

Soon after this had been said, Mabel saw something which struck her as more strangely beautiful than anything she had ever seen before in Nature, even in that home of beauty, the West. The sun had been some minutes gone, the clouds seemed descending to shut out even the yellow brilliance that remained in the western sky, when suddenly there arose, flowing out from no one region of the sky, but from the whole horizon seemingly, a deep golden glow. It did not come in rays, there was no flash or sparkle in it, it took no path in the air. It was a flood of light, deeper in colour than the sunset yellow, warm, soft, turning all the world to the richest purple and dark burnished gold. There was something awful and mysterious in the beauty of it, flowing as it did from no visible source. One might have imagined some great new light, neither sun nor moon, kept out of human sight itself, but allowed to bathe earth in its radiance for a few minutes that autumn evening.

Yet with all its solemnity it was so lovely that those who were in it felt no fear; it was rare, but not unnatural; only one of Nature's glories seldom shown. Mabel had seen the rivers in much wonderful colouring, from her point of vantage on Pensand lawn; she had seen them all rose from the rosy sky, and fading gradually through the tenderest opal tints into bluish silver. She used to think that was lovelier than anything; but this majesty of light, glowing as it were of itself, without the sun, went beyond anything she had ever imagined. To be on the river, too, the very place to enjoy it best, passing over it, reflected in

it, bathed in it—Mabel could not speak; she could only meet Dick's eyes with an answering smile. Anthony, too, was watching it from the churchyard at Carweston, counting the ridges of purple hill and moor that rose far away beyond the glowing Mora. And General Hawke wondered at the glory that filled his room; while Mrs. Lancaster and Miss Northcote looked out from their St. Denys windows: Flora's eyes dim with foolish tears; Kate wondering how soon Dick would be home, and whether it was possible that Mabel would go out with him. Only one person spoke in Dick's boat; that was Matthew Fenner, who repeated with emphasis his former prophecy: 'A gale afore morning.'

Certainly, at present, nothing could be stiller than the world was; there was hardly air enough to make Mabel shiver on the water. The glow faded away as suddenly as it had come, and the twilight came on rapidly. It was almost dark when they touched the quay at St. Denys, and Mabel stepped out of the boat, held by Dick's firm hand, and obeying his caution to 'mind the chains.' Up the dark steep lanes they walked slowly together; the air seemed to grow warmer as they mounted the hill. Mabel never could walk fast, but still they were longer than they need have been, climbing up by tree-shaded banks and old rough stone walls, turning round to look at the distance all alive with the lights of Morebay, talking low as they passed under high rocky gardens, where other people might be walking in the still sweet evening. At last they were at the foot of Miss Northcote's steps, under the shade of her evergreens.

'It is just like a dream, Dick,' whispered Mabel.

'One you will never wake from,'

said Dick. 'I feel just as if I had run away with you in spite of everybody. I haven't, have I? You heard the General say it. But I always thought an elopement would be the finest fun in the world.'

'O, I never would have done that.'

'I think you would, if I couldn't have got you by any other means.'

The drawing-room window was open, not far above their heads. Dick's aunt had been listening anxiously for his footstep. She was quite thrown out, however, by hearing two people come slowly dawdling up the lane. She wished they would not stop to talk at the very foot of her steps. Then it suddenly dawned upon her that the man's voice was no other than Dick's, and in a state of amazed curiosity she went out to the door, opened it, and came softly to the top of the steps.

'Good heavens, Dick!' she said.

'What have you been doing?'

'I've only run away with her,' said Dick. 'She says nothing shall ever induce her to do it again. There, aunt Kate, take her. She belongs to you till we sail.'

'What do you mean, you dreadful boy?' said Kate. 'Come, dear Mabel; he has no business to keep you standing out here in the night air.'

She put her arm round Mabel, and took her into the house at once, bringing her into the lighted drawing-room, where she could see the pale excited little face. She herself was hardly less excited.

'General Hawke will have nothing more to do with her,' said Dick. 'He has made me her guardian instead. You can't say I am not a fitter one.'

Mabel smiled, turned away

from the light, which dazzled her, and hid her face on Kate's shoulder. Then Dick gave his impatient aunt a slight summary of his visit to Pensand that afternoon, and what had come of it. Kate was astonished, as she well might be, but not the less ready and happy to accept her charge; and these three sat up very late, talking over all they had to do in the next fortnight.

Mabel hardly slept at all that night, under these strange new circumstances; but then very few people in St. Denys did sleep. Soon after midnight the wind began to blow in wild howling gusts up the river, and before morning the boatman's prophecy was fully verified; it was blowing a gale. There was nothing to be seen from the windows but flying clouds of mist, and driving lashing rain, while the wind roared as if in that stillness last night it had been gathering itself up, drawing breath, for a tremendous effort which was to sweep everything away. In the upper ground great trees which had stood many storms were uprooted by this one; chimneys and tiles and whole roofs were smashed in St. Denys, windows blown in, verandahs carried bodily away. Kate Northcote's house was not damaged, though its inhabitants could hardly hear themselves speak all through the morning. Kate and Mabel sat by the fire and tried to talk. Dick marched restlessly about; he wanted to go to London on some of his hundred affairs, but those to whom he belonged would not hear of it while the gale was still raging. At last, in the afternoon, it was a little quieter, and Dick was to be kept in no longer. They watched him from the window, as far as they could see him, down the lane, and then they watched the wildly-

blown steam of the train that carried him away. When even that was gone, Mabel asked Kate if she might write a letter.

'Certainly, my dear,' said Kate.

She established Mabel at her writing-table, and went on with her work, sitting by the fire. A little wonder crossed her mind as to who Mabel's correspondent might be, especially as the letter took a long time to write; and glancing at the girl once or twice, she saw her frowning in a puzzled way, and leaning her head on her hand, as if the task was a very hard one. Presently Mabel got up and came to her, bringing the letter.

'Do you mind reading this, aunt Kate?' she said gravely, with a little pink in her cheeks. 'Tell me if you think Dick would not like it—but I want to send it very much.'

Kate was certainly startled by the beginning, 'Dear Randal;' for Dick had confided to her General Hawke's true reason for wishing his ward to leave Pensand at once.

'Is there any real necessity for writing to him, Mabel?' she said, looking up.

'Not necessity exactly,' said Mabel. 'But he has been much nicer lately—and he almost begged my pardon for all that bother. I fancy he suspected something, for he asked me why I was changed, and I said I would tell him some day. And I think he won't be so vexed to find that I have come away, if I write and tell him myself. It seems almost as if I had run away from him; and there could be no reason for *that*, now that we understand each other.'

'O, you understand each other! But General Hawke sent you away. It was no doing of yours.'

'Randal will be less vexed, less angry with everybody, if I

write and tell him,' Mabel persisted.

'Well, dear, I should have thought it a pity to begin a correspondence; but perhaps you know best,' said Kate, and then she glanced through the letter.

'Dear Randal,—I have some news to tell you about myself, which I would rather you did not hear from any one else first. You thought me changed when I came back from Carweston. I was then engaged to Dick Northcote, and it was settled yesterday that we should be married and go out to New Zealand in a fortnight. Dick saw your father yesterday, and he gave his consent, because he understood that this was the only thing to make me really happy. I am come to stay with Miss Northcote, and am not going back to Pensand, because there is so much to be done before we sail. I hope I shall see you again, and that we shall part friends. I think Dick would say so too. I can never be thankful enough to your father for his kindness to me, and I must say that I am very sorry to leave him.—Yours truly,
MABEL ASHLEY.'

Kate could make no objection to this letter, so simply written from Mabel's true unconventional self. She watched the girl's quiet face with both admiration and interest, as she folded her letter with fingers that trembled a little, and addressed it to Randal at his club.

There was no time for dreaming over any past adventures, however interesting, in the next fortnight that flew over their heads. As for Dick, crowded with business as he was, Mabel saw very little of him. He had to make all the arrangements for their marriage, which was to be very quiet, on the morning of the

day they were to sail. He had to have interviews with Mabel's lawyers, Messrs. Atkins & Jones, who disapproved very strongly, like sensible men, of her marrying under age and going out to New Zealand. In fact, they would hardly believe that General Hawke was in his right mind when he consented. Dick had also to take his own and his wife's passage on board the *Empress*, a fine ship of which he knew the captain; to buy every conceivable thing for his new home, in London or Morebay; and to do hundreds of commissions for Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, who had flattered themselves that they were inviting back the same careless, jolly, unattached Dick, who for so long had been the life of their station.

It seemed likely that Mr. and Mrs. Northcote's baggage would be cargo enough in itself for a moderate-sized steamer. All this time Kate and Mabel were equally busy, with Mrs. Strange's help and advice, in providing Mabel with clothes and everything else they could think of. Miss Wrench, having returned to London, did commissions for them there, and sent down several large boxes by the Great Western Railway. Mrs. Strange hunted up a charming lady's-maid, a native of Carweston, whose one wish was to go to New Zealand. Her father had been a sailor, and she was never so happy as at sea.

So those last days rushed on, through more or less stormy weather, which made Kate Northcote shiver a little when she thought of her children at sea. One arrangement after another was finished, and the time drew very near.

Then there came a friendly note of congratulation from Randal, who had come back to Pensand, but had not shown himself

at St. Denys. He enclosed a few lines from his father, begging Mabel to spend her last afternoon with him at the Castle. The General also said—at which Dick made a long face—that as he could not himself be at the wedding, he hoped the bride would allow his son Randal to take his place, and to give her away.

'He will do you no harm, Dick,' said Mabel. 'And we can't possibly say no.'

'Ah, you always had a weakness for him. Well, I don't suppose I shall see him or anybody else who likes to invite himself. Let the poor beggar come. At any rate it will convince Atkins & Jones that your guardian meant it. By the bye, though, he'll meet Flora Lancaster!'

'I must tell her he is coming,' said Mabel, 'and then she can please herself.'

CHAPTER XXXIII.

RAIN AND FOG.

RANDAL had gone to town that night, with the conviction forced upon him that he must give up Mabel Ashley for the present; but he had no idea of giving her up for ever. He could not take her money now, though she so generously offered it. He must wait, and must fight on as best he could, get money on the easiest terms possible; if he was driven to that mortgage, it could not be helped. These difficulties would only last for a time, he thought. Mabel was already in a much better humour with him than she was a month ago; perhaps he had been foolish in urging her so eagerly then. There was something odd and independent in her manner, and her mind seemed to be made up very firmly. Yet

Randal thought he must be a fool indeed if in the course of the next two years he could not bring himself to the right point again with a girl like her; that point where Captain Cardew had stepped in and spoilt all before.

Then came Mabel's letter, to put an end to all his plans.

'Well, after all,' said Randal to himself, 'we might have been miserable. She would, I daresay. And her colouring was all wrong. But when there was seventy thousand pounds actually in the family, it seemed such folly to let it go out again, particularly under the circumstances. Dick has played his little game well. But I should think she would die on the voyage.'

On the whole Randal took it with philosophy. He was not a person from whom any black scheme of revenge might be expected, as he liked to be cool, and to feel like a gentleman. But the failure of his pet scheme was depressing. He carried through his mortgage business, though with a little regret at vexing his father; there seemed now to be no help for it. It struck him also, for he was anything but an imprudent man, that he had better try to draw in a little. The turf, billiards, &c., were very attractive, but he was unlucky, and they would most likely ruin him in the end. He thought he would try to live mostly at Pensand for the next year or two. The estate might be improved very much; his father, who had succeeded an elder brother there, had taken no trouble with it. Also it was plain that his father could not live much longer, and in his present state he could hardly be left quite alone. Randal, with all his faults, was not a completely bad son.

These good resolutions marked

out for him about as stupid a life as a young man with his tastes could well be compelled to live; but Randal satisfied himself that they were prudent, and that he *must* be prudent, as the silly little heiress had chosen to give herself to some one else—a great oaf who would not know how to spend the money when he had it, Randal added to this. It occurred to him once or twice that the business of pursuing a woman for her money was an unpleasant one, and that he was glad to be out of it; but still he was disappointed, and when his affairs in town were settled, he started on his journey home in a gloomy frame of mind. He arrived at Morebay on an afternoon of pouring rain, which blotted out all beauty, and made this Queen of the West as dark and dismal as any ordinary town. His train was late, and as he had something to do in Morebay which took him down near the quay from which the river steamers started, he decided to go home that way, and telegraphed to his groom to meet him at the St. Denys quay, instead of at the station. When his business was done the evening had quite closed in, wet and foggy and dark. He was the last to hurry on board the St. Denys boat, which was getting up steam. She whistled for the last time, and finally moved off, as he stood and looked round the wet deserted deck. No shelter was to be had there; it was still raining heavily, and the passengers, not caring to be wet through, had crowded down into the little saloon cabin. After one or two turns Randal came to the same conclusion, and followed them below.

Twenty or thirty people were sitting on red velvet sofas round the cabin, which was dimly lighted by a swinging oil-lamp.

There were men in mackintoshes, women in waterproof cloaks, most of them poor and shabby, and carrying large baskets. Randal sat down at the end of one of the sofas, close to the companion, pulled his hat over his eyes, and wondered how long he should be able to endure the mixture of odours, wet clothes, smoke, fish, &c. These people, he supposed, were all seasoned to it; but it soon appeared that one of them, at least, was not. A woman at the farther end of the cabin, wrapped in a cloak, and carrying a basket like the others—but the cloak was pretty and the basket was refined—suddenly rose and sat down again, catching vaguely with her hand at the table.

‘Are you ill, ma’am?’ said a gruff man’s voice.

‘No. I’m rather faint. Let me go on deck, please.’

‘To be sure you shall. Give us your hand. I’ll help you. Here, missus, lay hold o’ the basket,’ said the sturdy seafaring man beside her.

But the woman’s voice had startled Randal, for it was Flora Lancaster’s. He got up and stepped forward, as Flora, very pale, and leaning on the sailor’s arm, came towards the companion. Randal might easily have avoided her, for she did not see him, and as it was he hardly knew why he chose to interfere. But he stood at the foot of the stairs, and said to the sailor, with a slightly imperious nod, ‘I know the lady. I will take her on deck, and shelter her under my umbrella.’

Then he gravely took off his hat to Flora, and offered her his arm. She stared, as if she hardly knew who he was or what he meant; but she took his arm mechanically, as it seemed, and the sailor fell back, to wonder with

his wife what was up between those two.

Standing on the streaming deck, under Randal’s umbrella, with fog and rain blowing in her face, Flora’s life and colour soon came back to her. The first thing she did was quietly to withdraw her hand from his arm.

‘Thank you,’ she said. ‘Don’t stay here, pray, to get wet for nothing. I could not bear the atmosphere of that cabin, so I shall not go below again. I am wet already, so it does not signify.’

‘So am I,’ said Randal. ‘Rather an unfortunate day to choose for shopping, wasn’t it?’

‘Yes, but I was obliged to go,’ said Flora.

Then they were both silent. The rain was going off a little, but Randal still held the umbrella, and the boat went cutting along through the dark water, under the hulls of great ships which loomed like castles through the fog.

‘I am on my way back from town,’ said Randal. ‘I went upon some rather disagreeable business. Money is a great plague, or rather the want of it. It cripples one at every turn.’

‘Yes,’ said Flora. ‘People who are independent of it must be very happy.’

‘Nobody is,’ said Randal.

He had the strangest feeling of impatience, as he stood there with Flora, and sheltered her from the rain. He felt as if it was her duty to sympathise with him in his failures and disappointments, to be a little curious about his affairs. Her indifference seemed to him unnatural, and, being as blind as he believed himself sharp-sighted, he thought it was real.

‘You heard of Dick Northcote’s engagement?’ he said.

‘Yes,’ said Flora, in a tone as

quiet as his own, certainly without a note of triumph in it. 'I hope they may have better weather than this for their passage.'

'I hope so. I would not go to those detestable colonies if there was gold to be picked up in the streets. Rather accept my fate of staying at Pensand and being a beggar. That is about it, do you know.'

'Is it? I am sorry,' said Flora.

Randal was on the point of begging her not to say what she did not mean. But he checked himself, and went on to waste more information on this provoking woman.

'My father is a little better,' he said. 'But he is just in that helpless state which may linger on for years without any change. He is tolerably happy in his mind, and I hope he will enjoy my company, as I shall spend the rest of his life with him. I have taken your advice in one particular.'

'I do not remember giving you any advice,' said Flora coldly.

'On one occasion you told me it was not too late to stop certain expensive habits of mine. I have done it. I have pulled up in all directions. I am going to look after the Pensand property, and be a model squire.'

'Indeed!'

'You did not give me credit for such good sense?'

'O, surely! You would always have sense enough to do what was plainly for your advantage.'

Randal felt the thrust, but he smiled.

'One sometimes has false ideas of one's advantage,' he said. 'This seems to be a true one—intensely disagreeable, as so many good things are. I look forward to a life of ceaseless boredom, spent in vain efforts to pay off my mortgage and other encumbrances, pitied by nobody, without a creature to care whether I go to the

dogs or not—as I probably shall in the end. For human nature won't stand Pensand in solitude. I have tried it before.'

Flora did not speak.

'Don't you pity me?' said Randal at last.

'No.'

'I knew you would not, but you might, for I am miserable enough,' said Randal.

She turned her face away from him. 'It has stopped raining,' she said. 'Don't let me keep you here.'

'It is impossible ever to undo the past,' said Randal. 'Generally one wouldn't wish it, but I do. Those two years were the best and happiest time in my life, and since the day that ended them I have never known a happy moment. Do you believe that, Flora?'

She turned to him then with a bright flush on her face, and spoke hastily and tremblingly.

'I can believe it in one way, because any one who behaved so never could be really happy. But don't speak to me like that, please; it is almost insulting.'

'I know. We ought both to forget all about it,' said Randal. 'You seem to find that possible—at least, to forget everything but anger. I don't; I am horribly miserable.'

'How can you talk so!' exclaimed Flora.

'It makes no difference to you, of course. But I suppose people are allowed to repent, and are forgiven too, in a less rancorous world than this. You must take my repentance as the only amends I can make—and the knowledge that I am the most miserable fellow in the universe. Don't think it is Mabel Ashley's engagement that has brought me to this level. I am glad of that; I swear to you that I am.'

At that moment, standing in the wet darkness by the side of

the only woman he had ever loved, Randal meant what he said. His love was not worth having, of course; but Flora had never lost it; she had it still. Perhaps it was a little doubt of her own strength of resistance that made her say suddenly,

'Will you go away, please? I cannot talk to you any more. If you won't leave me here by myself, I must go below again.'

'No need for that. We are letting off steam, and the world is coming on deck,' said Randal, in his quiet voice. 'I must rescue your basket, and see you safe on shore.'

The worthy sailor and his wife came up at once with the basket. Flora thanked them earnestly for their care of it. Randal stood near her as the boat passed up to the landing-place; the light of a lamp fell on her face. Her eyes were wet, and there were two bright spots on her cheeks. She looked thin and worn; but somehow Randal thought she was as beautiful as ever, and the suffering in her face, which had so strangely deepened its expression, went straight to his heart; for he had one, if it was only an atom within a thick crust of worldly selfishness.

'Will you allow me to drive you up the hill?' he said to her, as the boat stopped, in a voice of respect and tenderness.

'No, thank you,' she said. 'My father was coming to meet me.'

Randal led her on shore, but did not venture as far as Captain Cardew, who was steering himself with some care across the slippery quay. He watched Flora safe to her father's side, however, and then struck off to the corner where his dog-cart was waiting, took the reins from Jenkins, and drove off with the pleasant and unusual excitement of a good conscience.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AFLOAT.

THERE is something to be said for those people who discourage farewell visits and dislike saying good-bye. For so much is expected from these set farewells; they are such a depth of silent pain, if people care for each other, such a string of speeches if they do not. And then afterwards so many things are found to have been left unsaid; the time is sure to have been wasted—the more precious it is, the more certain *that* is. Even Mabel, with these friends of a few months, found it hard to say good-bye, and wished she could have been carried quietly off without the effort of parting.

The most trying thing was the hour she spent with General Hawke on her last afternoon. The old man was unhappy, and there were tears in his eyes as he told her he had been a bad guardian to her; he was afraid her father would think so. Mabel contradicted all he said with a gentle affectionateness which made it still harder for him to part with her. He held her hand, and would not let it go; he asked her over and over again if she had had a miserable summer. Mabel was afraid that some of his unhappiness arose from the thought of being left alone with Randal; and when at last she had left him, and Randal, who had come into the room, was following her down-stairs, she turned and looked at him gravely.

'Do be kind to him,' she said. 'He is so old, and I'm afraid he feels lonely.'

'Very likely he does; so do I,' said Randal. 'Don't think about him. But you won't after you have left the house.'

'Indeed I shall,' said Mabel a

little indignantly. 'I shall think of him a great deal, and I am going to write to him.'

'He will like that, and I shall have the pleasure of answering your letters,' said Randal.

'But do tell me you mean to be good to him,' Mabel persisted.

'He and I understand each other,' said Randal. 'My care can never be like a woman's. That is what he really wants now.'

'What a pity—' began Mabel quickly, in a low voice.

'Yes, it is a pity,' said Randal.

She coloured, and said no more, being quite sure that he did not follow her thoughts. But in many a happy hour afterwards the poor old General came back to her mind, sitting there alone and helpless by his fire, with a worn disappointed look in his face, as he dreamed sadly through the days in the great silent house.

Mabel's other farewells were not so sad as this one, being all to active happy people, who had plenty to live for after she was gone. She drove straight from Pensand Castle to Carweston, where she was to sleep that night, and to be married in Anthony's church the next morning. The storms had lulled themselves for the present, and it was a beautiful sunny afternoon. Till dusk, and long after, Mabel was wandering about in the garden with Anthony, having her last talk with this friend of hers, who in her heart I believe she loved next to Dick, and perhaps honoured more. Anthony was telling her all that he imagined of her new life, the voyage, the arrival, the station life, describing in his odd way the people she would meet, and her talks with them—even telling her what she would think of the new sights she saw. Mabel listened half in a dream, but she was very well aware of the strain

of gentle wisdom underlying all that Anthony said. In after days she found, not much to her surprise, that the remembrance of this talk guided her in many ways. She caught herself imagining what Anthony would have said about the real people that she met, what he would have advised in any little difficulty, and his thoughts became a sort of tune to which her life could set itself. It was remarkable, though perhaps most natural, that his words always harmonised perfectly with a small Book of Psalms, bound in soft leather, which he gave her in the garden that afternoon.

Presently Dick's voice called them into the house; he had arrived to dinner with his Yorkshire cousin, Harry Northcote, who was come down to the wedding. Mabel left the garden with a smile and a sigh. Dick's voice of course always brought happiness; but she thought his cousin a bore, and every little change in the day's events seemed to cut off some old association, to bring the time nearer when all would be left behind, and the great ship would steam out of the bay.

Mrs. Strange had put a few autumn flowers in the chancel of the low old church, where Anthony preached on Sundays to his little flock of country people. The church was always too large for them; they sat in a cluster amidst the solid granite pillars, which looked like rocks beaten by the sea. Anthony had some satisfaction in knowing that their ancestors for many generations had sat there before them, and that his own influence over them was hereditary too; his father and grandfather and great-grandfather had been squires and rectors of Carweston before him. In their case the succession had not answered badly. But it did not

seem likely that the present squire would ever marry and have a son to carry on the worthy chain.

Anthony rather liked weddings generally. This one seemed to please him very much, if his friends could judge by the joyful peace with which his face was shining, and the content in his voice as he read the service that gave Dick and Mabel to each other once for all. The church was full of villagers, who watched the little wedding-party with curious eyes. It was very small, very quiet; there was no show about it, not enough to please Harry Northcote, who thought that when he married an heiress she should at least wear a white satin gown. Mabel was married in the dress in which she was to go on board. She came in on Randal's arm, and had no bridesmaids, unless Miss Northcote might be considered as one. Harry Northcote thought this also a barbarism, and attacked Kate about it afterwards. But Kate told him that Mabel had no girl friends, and that though plenty of girls might of course have been collected among their acquaintances, she liked better, under the circumstances, to have no one there she did not know well. The simpler the better, she thought, and Dick entirely agreed with her. Harry, however, who was very sociable, disapproved of the whole thing. He remarked that a girl had one chance in her life of being the chief interest to every one who saw her, and that it was quite unfair to marry her off in a corner like this, and then bundle her on board ship as if they were ashamed of the transaction.

'I should have had the wedding in the big church at Morebay,' said Harry, 'and the band of the regiment to play them down to the pier. Then you and I would

have been host and hostess at a grand ball in the town-hall in the evening, while they, poor things, were tossing in the Channel.'

Kate thought the actual arrangements very much to be preferred, and Mabel certainly wished for nothing better. The late October sun shone kindly on her as she walked out of the church, and down the paved pathway to the gate, without any school-children to throw nosegays before her; but with clanging joy-bells almost rocking the old tower, and telling the fishers on the Mora, and the shepherds on the purple-shaded hills beyond, that another chapter had begun in the lives of two human beings at Carweston. General Hawke had his window open, too, at Pensand, and heard the bells, and said, 'God bless her, poor little woman!' Flora Lancaster had walked out from St. Denys on the north road, and when the peal broke suddenly upon her ears, she was standing by that wall where Dick found her one summer afternoon looking across the valley. She smiled and breathed a good wish for them, and then turned back towards home; for she meant to go down to Morebay and say good-bye to them on the pier, where she might be easily hidden in the crowd. She had asked Mabel to let her do this, for she could not bring herself to go to the wedding after that meeting with Randal on board the boat.

The wedding-party drove from Carweston to Morebay early in the afternoon. There were the bride and bridegroom, Mrs. Strange and Anthony, Kate Northcote, Harry, and Randal Hawke. He had behaved so well that day in the character of Mabel's guardian, that Anthony and Dick had found it possible to endure his presence, to which they had both looked

forward with extreme disgust. The sun shone over the autumn landscape, the brown and red and orange woods, the Mora and the Penyr glittering like sheets of silver. The green water in the harbour danced and splashed and sparkled in the sun, rocking the passing boats, and leaping up the black sides of the men-of-war. Out in deep water rode the great steamer Empress, her masts and funnels standing up against the background of bright heaving sea. The baggage was all on board long ago. These passengers had to go out to her in a boat: their friends meant to see the last of them, even Mrs. Strange, who was more active and venturous than many a young woman.

As the little group stood on the pier, waiting till the boat was ready, Dick Northcote suddenly drew his wife aside.

'Here's a friend who wants to say good-bye to you,' he said.

He had been looking out for Mrs. Lancaster, and had suddenly discovered her among the idle people who flocked upon the pier. Flora was strangely shy that day. She hardly even responded in words to Mabel's affectionate greeting; her eyes strayed nervously towards Mrs. Strange and the people standing beside her. But then she collected herself, and shook hands cordially with Dick, and kissed Mabel, wishing them a good voyage and every happiness.

'I should like to think that you are happy too,' said Mabel, in a low voice, looking at her.

Flora seemed confused and uncomfortable, and would not meet her eyes.

'O yes, thank you,' she said. 'I should be most ungrateful if I was not. By the bye, my father and mother told me to give you their best wishes.'

'You must thank them for us,'

said Dick. 'Captain Cardew prophesied a good passage when I saw him yesterday. You are coming on board with us? You haven't seen Mabel's cabin.'

'No, thank you; I must go home at once.'

'Now, how unkind of you!' said Dick. 'All our real friends are coming, and I thought you were one of them. Don't look satirical.'

'I didn't,' said Flora, smiling, though her eyes filled with tears. 'You will excuse me, won't you?' she said, looking imploringly at Mabel.

'Yes, of course,' said Mabel, pressing her hand. 'Good-bye. And, O, remember that you promised to write to me. Write very soon. I shall be so dreadfully lonely when I first get there, shall not I, Dick? And mind you send me plenty of news—good news—nice cheerful news about yourself.'

'I'll do my best,' said Flora.

The next minute they were gone, and she drew back among the spectators. But when the boat had put off, she went forward to the edge of the pier, and watched them speeding away to the steamer. They were talking among themselves; no one looked back or noticed her, except her old friend Dick, who waved his hat and smiled.

'Who was that for?' said Randal.

'Mrs. Lancaster,' answered Dick shortly.

Randal was silent for a moment or two, and then resumed his talk with Harry Northcote.

Flora stood there till the boat reached the ship, and watched them go on board one by one. Then she turned away, and long before the boat returned to the pier she was on her way home to St. Denys.

As the autumn afternoon was closing in, the great steamer passed out to sea with her trail of smoke behind her. Mabel stood on deck with her husband, and looked back at the fast-fading shore of England; Morebay terraces blending themselves into a dim white line, varied woods into a dark mass on the hills. This was the evening of her wedding-day, and the beginning of the journey to her new home on the other side of the world. Mabel's thoughts, however, were not altogether full of herself and Dick.

'Do you know, Dick,' she said confidentially, 'I believe poor Flora is in love with him still.'

'You don't mean it! Can she be such a fool?' said Dick, with a long whistle.

CHAPTER XXXV.

AFTER ALL.

ST. DENYS fell back into its old quiet life, as it was before Dick Northcote came home from New Zealand to wake it up, before there was the exciting interest of the little heiress living with General Hawke at Pensand. St. Denys, in its ignorance, was now rather inclined to be sorry for Mrs. Lancaster, for whom it had formerly felt a jealous dislike, and to think that young Northcote had behaved badly to her again. Certainly, when he first came home, he had been devoted to her; they were hardly ever to be seen apart; and now to go and marry Miss Ashley! No wonder Mrs. Lancaster looked ill and unhappy, poor thing! The good women of St. Denys found it a pleasant new sensation to pity Mrs. Lancaster, especially as her mother, when inquired of, looked so mysterious that they felt sure the affair had been a

serious one. Mrs. Cardew in her inmost soul would have dearly loved to tell them the whole story, but her loyalty to her daughter prevented this.

After Dick and Mabel had sailed, Flora's parents again became anxious about her. She was so nervous and irritable sometimes, as to seem almost feverish, a sad change from the gentle Flora of old days. At other times she was depressed and dismal; her mother would come into the room and find her crying. But this was better than the impatience, for she would lay her head on her mother's shoulder and submit to be caressed and comforted, a proceeding which soothed poor Mrs. Cardew, if it had not any lasting effect on Flora. Mrs. Cardew did not know what to make of it, for Flora had been much better, and this was a relapse. She was inclined to trace it to a certain wet day, when Flora had insisted on going to Morebay for some shopping, and had come back in a dripping state and dreadfully tired—so tired, that with her father's arm she could hardly get up the hill.

One foggy afternoon in November, the two women were sitting by the drawing-room fire at Rose Cottage. Mrs. Cardew was working; Flora was leaning back with her hands folded, thinking just then of Mabel, and wondering when she would be able to write to her.

'I'm sorry I promised to write, mother,' she said, in a low weary voice. 'What have I to tell her? Good news about myself, she said. She will have a long time to wait for that, I think.'

'O, I don't know, Flora,' said Mrs. Cardew cheerfully. 'Try to look on the bright side of things. So young and pretty as you are still, my dear—'

'Young and pretty!' said Flora, smiling. 'Old and ugly, mother, when I look in the glass. No; that part of my life has most certainly come to an end. I'm Cross-patch, as you see her in the picture-books, fit for nothing but to sit by the fire and spin. Old and ugly and cross! The wonder is, how you and father manage to put up with me.'

'But, don't you see, we love you, dear,' said Mrs. Cardew.

'That is more wonderful still. I'm worse than Cross-patch, for I don't even spin. She was of some use in the house; but I sit with my hands before me, and grumble, and do nothing. O mother, mother, when Dick Northcote was rowing me round that afternoon, I very nearly threw myself into the river. I think I should have done it, if it had not been for him. I never once thought of you. What would you have done?'

'We should have gone to our graves very soon. Our hearts would have been broken,' said Mrs. Cardew.

'I don't wish to do it now,' said Flora. 'I'm not so bad as I was then. Look here; I'm going to tell you a secret.'

'Yes, dear?' said Mrs. Cardew, laying down her work.

'You remember that wet afternoon when I came up from Morebay by the boat, and was so tired.'

'Of course. Didn't I say so?' exclaimed Mrs. Cardew.

'Didn't you say what?' said Flora, staring at her.

'That you had been worse ever since. Well, go on.'

'That day was too much for me,' said Flora, 'because I met somebody on board, and had a long talk with him. I hope I behaved properly. O, it *was* trying!'

'Gracious! Not *him*?' said Mrs. Cardew.

Flora nodded.

'You spoke to him! You let him speak to you! A long talk!' said Mrs. Cardew rather breathlessly. 'Mercy on me, Flora, how could you!'

The flush of colour in her mother's face brought a much deeper one into Flora's. Mrs. Cardew's tone and look of angry astonishment were hard to bear. Flora drew herself up a little, and was silent. Her mother's manner softened directly.

'There, dear, I beg your pardon, I'm sure. Only I was astonished. But no doubt you couldn't help it.'

'Not very well,' said Flora.

That little check had given her back the composure that was almost failing. She told her mother in a few words what had happened, the scene in the cabin, Randal's sudden appearance, the attempted indifference of their talk, and then his expressions of regret, and the coldness with which she had received them.

'He thinks I am just as angry as ever,' said Flora. 'I would hardly let him say anything.'

'And what he did say you didn't believe, I suppose,' said Mrs. Cardew.

'Well, mother, as you may imagine, I have been thinking of it ever since. I cannot quite say that, you know.'

'Dear me! I shouldn't have had any doubt myself.'

'I think you would if you had been in my place, and had considered. Why should he have said it if he didn't mean it? What I thought of him could not possibly matter to him. Our opinion can never affect his friends, his society. If he was not sorry, what object could he gain by telling me that he was?'

'What object does he mean to gain now?' said Mrs. Cardew.

Flora blushed deeply.

'None, probably,' she said, after a pause. 'I think he only wished to make some little amends for the past.'

'Then why do you trouble your head so much about it?' said Mrs. Cardew, gifted for the moment with preternatural sharpness.

Flora did not answer. She made a sort of hopeless little movement with her head, and stared into the fire. They were both silent for a few minutes, Mrs. Cardew looking very grave. Then there was a sharp ring at the bell, and, recognising the voice that asked whether she was at home, Flora lifted her eyes and looked almost wildly at her mother.

'There he is,' she said, under her breath.

'I won't let him come in,' said Mrs. Cardew hastily.

She started up, but did not succeed in stopping the visitor in time. Randal was in the room before she reached the door.

She made him a slight stiff bow. Flora stood like a statue, and let him take her hand, but neither of them spoke. It was about as awkward a situation as a man could find himself in; but Randal was seldom affected by a situation, or by want of words.

The fire was blazing up brightly; it was the only light in the little room, for the world outside was almost dark. Mrs. Cardew, poor woman, stood in the middle of the floor, without the faintest idea what to say or do. Flora stood with one hand on the chimneypiece, looking at Randal; the firelight was becoming to her, and to him also; there was nothing in his pale quiet face that could offend any one.

'I thought of writing to you,' he said to Flora, 'but I knew you would be more likely to listen to

me, if I came and spoke for myself. Have you thought it over at all, and will you forgive me?'

'That is a good deal to ask of my daughter, Mr. Hawke,' said Mrs. Cardew.

'I know it is,' said Randal, 'and I should not venture to ask it if I did not know how generous she is.'

'I do—I have forgiven you,' said Flora, turning away from him.

He looked at her silently for a moment. Then he turned to Mrs. Cardew.

'I want to apologise to you and your husband for a great deal. I have loved your daughter for years, as I love her now; but I ought never to have persuaded her to keep our engagement secret. I am very sorry for it. As to this summer, I was half driven out of my mind by money scrapes—but I will make no excuses for myself. I was very miserable all the time, and I knew that to make myself straight in one way I was losing all I really cared for. Flora, will you listen to me?' he went on, walking up to her. 'I came down on purpose to say this—no matter whether I found you alone or not. I never really loved any one but you. I can't bear life without you. I'm not good for much, but you might make something of me, if you would. Flora, will you forget what has passed, and marry me now, after all?'

Randal was out of himself for the moment. All his indifference was gone, and with something between pain and joy Flora remembered the looks, the tones of voice, that used to be so familiar. She sat down, and rested her head on her hand for a moment, trying to think, and to speak quietly.

'You forget,' she said; 'if one had no memory, there are all the old objections—General Hawke would never consent.'

'If that is all,' said Randal, 'I have been talking to him for the last week, and he knows it would be the best thing that could happen. If that is your only objection, dearest Flora—'

'Indeed it is not,' said Flora. 'I am only trying—to make you see how inconsistent you are. But do you suppose *my* father would ever consent now?'

'No, I don't believe he would,' muttered Mrs. Cardew.

'Of course he would not,' said Randal. 'Very well. Yes, I am inconsistent; you need hardly have told me that. In fact, I don't know how I mustered up courage to ask you, except that a drowning man catches at a straw, and the other day you did not seem to hate me quite. You are right to punish me, though, for if ever a fellow deserved it, I do; but it is a very heavy punishment, to last for one's whole life long. Well, I let my treasure go, fool that I was, and now I may stretch out my hands and pray for it for ever—I shall not have it back again.'

All this, said in a low voice, and with great earnestness, affected Mrs. Cardew so much that she was almost crying. She looked at Flora, but Flora did not move or speak, but still sat leaning her head on her hand, half turned away from Randal. There is no knowing how long he might have gone on with this pleading of his; but just then things were brought to a crisis by Captain Cardew's step on the gravel outside. Flora suddenly raised her head, and looked round at her mother.

'Don't let him come in here,' she said.

'No, dear, I won't,' said Mrs. Cardew, with determination, and she went away to keep guard over the Captain.

Randal now had the field to himself, and Flora was not long able to maintain her indifference. His prayers and protestations soon came to this:

'Don't you pity me, Flora? You do! You care for me still?'

And this time Flora had not the strength to say no.

Poor Mrs. Lancaster is not to be envied, I think, in her elevation from Rose Cottage to the gloomy halls of Pensand. When I told her story to my friends, some of them were surprised that she should have accepted Randal Hawke after all. Others, with deeper insight, said that she had only acted according to her nature.

She was happy in her renewed engagement, and Randal seemed devoted to her; but every one else looked at the affair with doubtful eyes, and Captain Cardew was so angry, when he found it was no use reasoning with an obstinate woman, that he declared he would never speak to either of them again. But it seemed not unlikely that his fondness for Flora and the influence of his wife—who of course, though with an anxious mind, took her daughter's side—would soften him in time.

So Flora had her will; but whether in days to come, the slave of a capricious man, instead of the idolised darling of unselfish parents, she will find it in her heart to regret her final choice, is perhaps an open question.

Flora sent this wonderful news of hers in her first letter to New Zealand. Neither Dick nor Mabel was very much surprised at this strange turn in her affairs. Mabel mused over many recollections, smiled a little, and did not say much. Dick did not know when he had felt more heartily sorry.

BY THE STREAM.

SWEET is the babbling water
Under my feet ;
And dark are the boughs, and darker
Where shadows meet.
The birds in the shade are singing
As sang they in spring ;
Their flight in rapture winging
While glad notes ring.

Brooklet and brown sweet water
Laughing in play ;
Leaflets o'er leaflets hanging
Sunbeams that stray ;
Flower-bells on moss that sparkle
Sweet as the spray ;
Rocks where the waters darkle,
Eddy, and play.

What need the green trees waving,
Shadowy sweet ;
What need the waters laving
Rocks at my feet ;
What need the birds' sweet singing,
Note upon note ;
What need the echoes thrilling,
Far as they float ?

Only a kindred echo,
Sweeter than they ;
Only a voice to answer
My voice to-day ;
Only the eyes of a lover
To gaze in mine,
Here where the shadows hover,
In shade divine.

Think it is spring-time, dearest,
Just once again ;
Think I am still the nearest
Your heart in name ;
Think we are still together
As we have been,
And this is not autumn weather,
And I—your queen.

RITA.

DISCIPLINE IN HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

DISCIPLINE—the art of forming the manners, a state of subjection, method of government, correction, and external mortification—is the one great point on which life in the Royal Navy centres; without it the service of the country cannot be carried out, a man-of-war would be unable to perform its daily duties, and those belonging to royal ships would be in a perpetual state of quarrel and disorder.

Naval discipline is only arrived at when there is prompt obedience, and all outward marks of respect and deference are paid to superiors. An order, simply because it is an order, being obeyed in the same outward way as if it was obeyed because most liked, inferiors paying attention to the implied wishes of their superiors loyally, whatever the character of those superiors may be, and all self being abrogated,—when this is arrived at, men become fit to go through anything, to stand and face certain death; and a senior can feel, whatever service he may be sent on, his juniors will follow him in that service without fail; for the great aim of discipline in a service like the Royal Navy is to produce implicit obedience in time of war. All naval training is for war; and as a preparation for such work obedience in the small things has to be carefully watched. However trivial the departure from obedience, it must be noticed. Punishment for offences is not all that is required for sound discipline: good arrange-

ments in the ship, example, encouragement, and rewards for those who do well, are the great helps to discipline; strict impartiality to all subordinates with this firmness, and behind all a strong arm, swift and sure to punish in some way whenever a fault has been committed. No fault allowed to pass; certainty of punishment should be the aim—slightly at first, but with every increasing offence greater severity.

The arrangements of the ship being good, and all help given to those who do well, it should be understood, so surely is some small order not obeyed, so surely will there be a penalty; but on officers must fall the blame when there is want of discipline; the arrangements and example rest with them. The rewards they have at command are numerous, and they have plenty of power. The certificates of character and conduct are so in their hands that a man's present and future depend on what they say. The men fall easily into what is wanted—a slight sign does—and officers should, from the first, learn that they must not expect approval as regards anything in the ship from those serving in her; error is so easily drifted into. Allow the men to show who and what please them, and they naturally, when anything occurs they dislike, express such dislike. By allowing them to show their likings, tacit permission is given to show dislikes, and when that occurs the cry out is, 'How badly the men

behave ! But the wrong has been in the first instance showing pleasure at their expressions of approbation, those who do so having no perception of what discipline really means. No feelings should be apparent in a disciplined service ; they have to be stamped out on the very first signs. If officers and men happen to like the service they are on, the ship they are in, and the arrangements of their daily life, all the better ; but they have no right to show this even by a sign. Individuality has to be suppressed ; each one is merely a unit filling a post, and as such must repress all feelings.

Every care should be taken to do the best for everybody—the Admiralty in the first instance, the admirals and captains next ; and all officers should study the well-being of every grade below them, securing their best interests ; but it should be done as a father would seek the best for his son, not expecting that son to express an opinion as to the right or wrong of what has been done. We know this is difficult in these days, when every one flies to a newspaper with his grievance ; and it is the fact of such being the fashion, among other causes, which retards the advancement of discipline in the Royal Navy. We do not mean to say that the door should be shut to those who are aggrieved ; nor is it so. Room is given for redress ; appeals can always be taken to higher authority, and captains and admirals invariably represent to the Admiralty whatever may come to their notice ; so that some pressure may be removed, or a benefit given to their subordinates. It is the privilege of their position so to do, and to the use of it all can bear testimony.

In years gone by senior officers may be said to have settled their

own discipline. There was little or no uniformity. A few principles were kept sight of generally ; otherwise each captain did as he thought best, being often both law-maker and law-breaker, making rules and regulations for his own ship, but treating all by which he should have been bound as waste paper. The offences that were punished varied in every ship, and the bluejackets had a saying, ' Each ship a different navy,' that aptly explains the case.

Some officers gained reputation by the invention of punishments of a class that could by no means be admired, as they seemed to aim at reducing men to a servile state ; flogging took place continually. But a little more than thirty years ago a change commenced, and for many years discipline trembled, and was on the verge of being lost altogether. Some seniors were clinging to the old ways when the days were past, and their ships bore within them a festering sore of sullen discontent. Others saw what was coming, and went with the tide—even faster than the tide.

The revolutionary affairs of 1848 had a great effect on naval discipline—some ships about that time having none, the men doing very much as they liked. The Russian war of 1854—continuous service having been introduced the year previous, causing much bad feeling—found the Royal Navy internally in commotion, the men in some cases resenting not being able to choose their ships, and going to those they were sent with sullen discontent. It was not until 1859, when a sudden increase of men, obtained by means of a bounty, brought into the Royal Navy all sorts of characters, that the discipline of the service as it is now commenced. It should be understood that although obedience is

as requisite in peace as in the old war at the beginning of this century—for in peace time only can war-training take place—yet officers and men in the service have quite changed, and the means of keeping discipline that held good fifty years ago could not last for a moment now. That which would not have been considered severe then would be called cruel now; what was severe then is brutal now; and though the case remains the same, the circumstances have altered, and it is with present circumstances alone we have to deal.

In 1859 our largest fleet was assembled in the Mediterranean, under the command of Admiral Sir William Martin, who had round him a circle of excellent officers; and then a discipline was commenced, which has spread, gone on, and is advancing. About this time also ships began to get the boys who had passed through the admirable training-ships which had been established, and from then until now some fixed principles have run right through the service. Admiralty orders have made ships very much the same; the moral tone of the whole navy has been raised, for men of good character form the majority of the service. There is much yet to be done, and room for improvement; yet we think day by day discipline gets better; and although not agreeing with the action of certain rules, to which we allude hereafter, we are quite sure no man is oppressed, even if some points in the regulations bear on him in what may be termed a bothering way, and cause him some irritation.

The Royal Navy, with the exception of such marines as are on shore in barracks in the United Kingdom, is governed by Act of Parliament, which Act remains in force until it is repealed. That

now in authority is the 29th and 30th Victoria, cap. cix., 10th August 1866, and the preamble of which runs thus:

‘Whereas it is expedient to amend the law relating to the government of the Navy, whereon, under the good providence of God, the wealth, safety, and strength of the kingdom chiefly depend.’

This statement shows that when in all solemnity the navy is thought of, its high place as regards the country is acknowledged, and we commend the preamble to our countrymen's memory.

After saying in the usual way by whom it is enacted, the first part is ‘The Articles of War,’ which has to be posted up in some conspicuous place in every ship, and read publicly to every one on board once every three months. The first article is that relating to the public worship of Almighty God, which is ordered to be according to the liturgy of the Church of England, solemnly, orderly, and reverently administered; that the chaplains are to perform their duties diligently; and that the Lord's Day be observed according to law. After this come the penalties for the following offences: misconduct in the presence of an enemy; not pursuing an enemy; discouraging the service or deserting post; misconduct of subordinate officers and men in action; spies; correspondence with an enemy; neglect of duty; mutiny, with or without violence; inciting others to mutiny; civilians endeavouring to seduce officers or men from allegiance to her Majesty; uttering seditious words; concealing traitorous designs; striking, or attempting to strike, a senior; insubordination; quarrelling; desertion; inducing to desert; entertaining a deserter; breaking out of the ship; absence without

leave; assisting desertion by civilians; civilians persuading officers or men to desert; swearing and other immoralities; officers cruel and oppressive to inferiors; suffering ships to be lost or hazarded; not defending a convoy; disobedience of masters of convoyed ships; taking on board goods, except under special circumstances; embezzling public stores; arson; making or signing false musters, records, or official documents; misconduct in hospital; attempting to create a disturbance on *just* grounds; not forwarding papers found in a prize; taking money, &c., out of a prize before condemnation; stripping and ill-treating prisoners taken in a prize; collusion with an enemy respecting a prize; stealing the cargo of a prize; and lastly two covering clauses, stating that the penalty against naval discipline not specified, and also for crimes against the Act, unless expressly specified, the punishment is to be according to the laws and customs used at sea. Then follow the offences punishable by ordinary law, and when punishable.

The second part of the Act contains the 'General Provisions;' the finding by a court-martial of intent, and of lesser offence than that charged; that rebels, armed mutineers, and pirates are to be treated as enemies; and also the authority to arrest offenders subject to the Act.

The third part contains the 'Regulations as to Punishments,' which stand as follows:

1. Death.
2. Penal servitude.
3. Dismissal with disgrace from her Majesty's service.
4. Imprisonment or corporal punishment.
5. Dismissal from her Majesty's service.

6. Forfeiture of seniority as an officer for a specified time, or otherwise.

7. Dismissal from the ship to which the offender belongs.

8. Severe reprimand, or reprimand.

9. Disrating a subordinate or petty officer.

10. Forfeiture of pay, &c., pensions, medals, decorations, and, in the case of a deserter, all clothes and effects.

11. Such minor punishments as are now inflicted according to the custom of the navy, or from time to time allowed by the Admiralty.

In these punishments each is inferior in degree to the one preceding it.

Her Majesty the Queen alone has power to remit the sentence of death, which sentence can only be given when four out of five members of the court-martial, and with a larger court a majority of two-thirds, agree; the sentence of death, except in case of mutiny, must be approved by the Commander-in-Chief abroad or the Admiralty at home.

The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty may remit any punishment but death; they can also lessen, but cannot increase. Penal servitude carries with it dismissal with disgrace, and dismissal with disgrace involves the forfeiture of all pay, pensions, &c., also causing incapacity to take any future service under the Crown. Imprisonment can only be for two years, but during that time there may be periods of solitary confinement of not more than fourteen days at a time, or eighty-four days in each year; hard labour may be awarded, and during the period of imprisonment there is always stoppage of pay, with loss of the time towards completion of service; petty and

non-commissioned officers have to be disgraced if imprisoned.

In corporal punishment not more than forty-eight lashes can be inflicted : no officer can be subject to it, nor can a petty or non-commissioned officer except in case of mutiny. No person can be tried for an offence after three years have elapsed since it was committed, or one year after his return to England when he has been away three years, provided he has not absconded to avoid apprehension.

All the offences provided for in the 'Articles of War' may be tried by a court-martial ; but any of them, not capital, committed by bluejackets or marines may be summarily dealt with by the captains of ships under such regulations as the Admiralty may issue. No penal servitude can be awarded except by court-martial, only three months' imprisonment for desertion, and not more than forty-two days with hard labour, or fourteen days' solitary confinement in a cell, for other offences ; and, except in cases of mutiny, no man can be flogged until his offence has been inquired into by one or more officers of the ship, and their opinion of his guilt or innocence recorded ; it is also enacted what 'time' a subordinate officer may lose.

The fourth part of the Act relates to 'Courts-Martial,' their constitution and proceedings.

The fifth part of the Act relates to 'Penal Servitude and Prisons,' giving authority to the Admiralty to arrange about prison accommodation, also to governors and gaolers of prisons for the reception and conduct of prisoners.

The sixth part of the Act contains the 'Supplemental Provisions ;' states the Act is to be called 'The Naval Discipline Act, 1866,' and when it is to

commence ; that every person in or belonging to her Majesty's Navy, and borne on the books of one of her Majesty's ships in commission, is subject to it ; and also that all other persons made liable to it shall be triable and punishable under its provisions. Her Majesty's land forces when embarked in her Majesty's ships are subject to the Act under Orders in Council ; and *all other* persons ordered to be received, or being passengers, on board her Majesty's ships are deemed to be persons under the Act, as the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty may regulate.

Certain articles lay down how in cases of hired vessels the Act is to apply ; also if a ship is lost, or the crew taken prisoners. Until a court-martial has inquired into the loss the ship is deemed to be in commission for the purposes of the Act—meaning that the Act is binding on the crew until released. Officers and crew of a ship lost may be tried by one or separate courts-martial. Should there be an offence after the wreck or loss there must be a separate court ; in case where no blame is attached for wreck or loss, officers and crew receive their pay until discharged or removed.

A senior officer of any two or more ships may arrange for the disposal of his officers and crew amongst other ships under his command.

By the Act bluejackets and marines cannot be arrested for debt, unless the debt was contracted before the debtor joined her Majesty's service ; and should any be arrested, on its being shown on oath the debt was contracted while serving, the man is immediately to be discharged.

The seventh part of the Act contains the 'Saving Clause,' by

which offenders could be tried under the repealed laws, if the offence had been committed before the Act came into force ; also that nothing in the Act shall take away the prerogative of the Crown, or the rights or powers of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty ; nor does it supersede the authority of the civil power in cases of offences which can be punished by the common or statute law ; nor does it prevent any person from being tried and punished in respect of any offence otherwise than under the Act.

The marines while serving on shore, when not borne on the books of one of her Majesty's ships, are governed by the Marine Mutiny Bill, which is the same as the Mutiny Bill, and has to be passed yearly.

The whole government of the Royal Navy is contained in the Naval Discipline Act, 1866 ; the court-martial being the great tribunal, its finding final, the sentence taking effect from the moment it is read ; though the Admiralty may remit portions of severe and quash illegal sentences. But in the every-day life of the ships the 'summary punishments,' which the Act empowers the Admiralty to issue from time to time, are the means by which order is maintained.

The 'summary punishments' may be regarded as ruling the police-courts, of which every ship has two : the inferior, where the commander or senior lieutenant is the magistrate ; and the superior, over which the captain sits as magistrate. Carrying out this idea, the court-martial, with its assemblage of at least three ships, and all its pomp and formality, may be compared to an assize.

The summary punishments now in force are thus divided :

1. Discharge with disgrace.

2. Discharge as objectionable.

3. Corporal punishment. Not to exceed forty-eight lashes.

4. Imprisonment for desertion. Not to exceed three calendar months.

5. Imprisonment for other offences. Not to exceed forty-two days.

6. Disrating, or reduction to the ranks.

7. Deprivation of good-conduct badges and of good-conduct medals.

8. Reduction to second class for conduct.

9. Solitary confinement in a cell or under a canvas screen on board. Not to exceed fourteen days.

10. (a) Grog to be stopped ; eat meals under sentry's charge ; after half an hour to dinner to stand for the remainder of the dinner-time on the leeseide of the quarter-deck ; extra work in watch below ; to be deprived of smoking, and to be under the sentry's charge during smoking hours. If in harbour, or an idler (i.e. day-duty man) at sea, to stand on the leeseide of the quarter-deck from 8 to 10 P.M. Not to exceed fourteen days.

(b) Grog to be stopped ; after half an hour to dinner to stand for the remainder of the dinner-time on the leeseide of the quarter-deck. Not to exceed seven days.

11. Stoppage of leave. Not to exceed three months.

12. Deductions from pay for leave-breaking and for unfitness for duty from drinking.

13. Reduction to a lower class for leave.

14. Stoppage of grog. Never to exceed thirty days, except for habitual drunkenness.

15. Carrying hammock or bag. Not to exceed one hour a day for three days.

16. Reprimand by the captain.

17. Extra lee-wheel, or to stand on the leese of the quarter-deck, after taking proper turn of duty at the wheel, look-out, &c. Not to exceed two hours, nor to extend beyond the period of the watch.

18. For marines only. Extra guard. Not to exceed seven days.

19. For boys only. Birching on the bare breech. Not to exceed twenty-four cuts or blows.

20. For boys only. Caning on the breech with clothes on. Not to exceed twelve cuts or blows with an ordinary cane.

Each of these punishments is less in degree than the one preceding, and they can be cumulative. Nos. 1, 2, 11, and 12 can be awarded to every one; No. 3 cannot be awarded to petty or non-commissioned officers, leading seamen, or men in the first class for conduct, except for mutiny. Petty and non-commissioned officers for desertion can be imprisoned the same as others, though exempt from No. 5; but leading seamen and men in the first class for conduct can be awarded it on being reduced to the second class for conduct. Chief petty officers are exempt from No. 8; but all others can be reduced to the second class for conduct on being disgraced. No petty or non-commissioned officer can be confined in a cell or awarded No. 10 or 17, but men in the first class for conduct can be so punished; only men in the second class for conduct. All ordinary seamen and boys can be awarded No. 15.

Flogging is so hedged in with restrictions that, except in cases of mutiny, it may be said to be in abeyance. Practically, only men in the second class for conduct are within its grasp, and they only for one other offence besides mutiny, 'using or offering violence to a superior officer;' but

from the isolated position of a man-of-war when at sea, or alone in some distant place, and considering the fact that service in a sea-going ship of the Royal Navy is under all circumstances that of war service—for declaration of war makes no difference to that of profound peace—it is absolutely necessary to have such a punishment to fall back on, otherwise the worst characters would come to the surface; and as in the civil state those who commit robbery with violence are subject to it, and in the army in the field the provost-marshal has such powers, there is nothing in the navy to make the men serving in it subject to peculiar severity.

We have dealt with the reverse side of the medal first, because self-restraint has to be imposed on all those who serve the Crown; but on the face of it there are the indulgences granted to bluejackets and marines, which nowadays are very great, and foremost amongst them is 'leave.' Whenever a ship is in port, which may be broadly stated as two-thirds of its time spent away from England, those men who have never broken their leave, their character being 'very good,' can go on shore every other night, even until the night before sailing. The leave-list is divided into four classes, viz. 1. special leave; 2. privilege leave; 3. general leave; and 4. habitual leave-breakers. The first-class special-leave men are those well-behaved men who always return to time and fit for duty. Chief petty officers are always in this class, but others not necessarily so; they go on shore, whenever the service will admit of it, the night which it will not be their turn to clean the ship in the morning, leaving the ship about six P.M., often earlier, and returning that night about ten

P.M., or the next morning about six A.M., as circumstances allow. Should one of these men not come off to the time ordered, in other words, 'break his leave,' he is reduced to the privileged leave-list, and for six months must come off to his leave before being restored to the special leave-list. Again, at the end of each six months, if a man's conduct happens to be recorded 'good,' he has to go to the privileged leave-list until his conduct is recorded 'very good,' when, if there has been no leave-breaking in the interim, he may be restored to his former class. Should a man be taken out of the special list for leave-breaking a second time during three years, he must wait twelve months before restoration.

The second-class privileged-leave men consist of men of 'good' character, who generally return punctually. Leave is only given to this class when convenient—Thursdays and Sundays—to the watch not wanted the next morning. If a privileged-leave man breaks his leave, or his conduct is noted 'fair,' he is put in the general leave-list for six months, and must return punctually during that time and be noted as 'good' before he can be restored.

The third-class general-leave men consist of all the rest, except the habitual leave-breakers. Men recorded 'fair,' and in the second class for conduct, are obliged to be in this class; and as good conduct governs the leave, when a petty officer, leading seaman, or man with a badge has to be placed in the general leave-list, he is also disgraced and loses his badge. General leave is given as circumstances permit—perhaps twice a month, but always monthly, unless being at sea intervenes.

The fourth class, habitual leave-breakers, are those who have

broken their leave three times within nine months, or three times within eighteen consecutive times; or any man who overstays twenty-four hours after being warned the ship is under sailing orders may be placed in this class. This class is only allowed leave when and where the captain may see fit; it must be at least once in three months, no man being allowed to be kept on board more than that period. If a man returns punctually three times successively within nine months he may be restored to the general leave-list; and this is much to be desired, for, as a rule, captains only see fit to allow a habitual leave-breaker on shore when no one else belonging to the ship is there, so that he finds himself alone and without companionship.

As leave is granted on all possible occasions, and as much of it as can be given, so for leave-breaking, leaving a boat when on duty, being unfit for duty after leave, or breaking out of the ship, there are maximum deductions and stoppage of leave, besides the above reductions to a lower class, which are laid down to be awarded at the discretion of the captain. For habitual leave-breakers, and men who have twice broken their leave within twelve months, the maximum deduction is imperative.

As the boys are not classed for conduct, so they are not classed for leave, and may not sleep out of the ship, being given leave for an afternoon, according to circumstances, many officers taking care never to let them go when 'general leave' is given.

Various instructions are issued from time to time by the Admiralty as a supplement to the *Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions*, a book issued under an

Order in Council. These instructions have up to a certain date been embodied as 'addenda,' and when issued simply appear as 'circulars.'

These regulations, instructions, addenda, and circulars are for the guidance of officers; the ranks in the navy are given, and precedence of command. Also the ceremonies to be observed. Each rank has a section as to its conduct and duties; and there is a long chapter on discipline, in which captains are directed to be very careful as to the promotion of men, and also in giving both officers and men their certificates.

The promotion of men takes place by merit. The first three steps have to be gained by reaching a certain standard of efficiency. Boys are examined as to their fitness for ordinary seaman at the age of eighteen, and are then made either first or second class ordinary seaman; they can then be examined for able seaman, passing, and being so rated, or A.B., as it is put on the ship's books when proficient. After that they are examined for the position of leading seaman, but cannot be so rated unless there are vacancies in the complement. From leading seaman they are advanced to second-class petty officers, as they have shown themselves likely to be useful petty officers and vacancies occur; and in the same way they are advanced to first-class petty officers, and also to chief petty officers. After passing for leading seaman a man's conduct has much to do with his advancement; before that it rests only on his abilities. A badly-conducted man can become an A.B., and pass for a leading seaman; but however good his abilities, he would never find himself a leading seaman until he had established good conduct as his future *rôle*.

Boys, on being rated first or second class ordinary seaman, are classed for conduct and leave. If they have not merited 'good' they are placed in the second class for conduct and general leave-list, and can only be raised to the first class for conduct on passing through six months without an entry against them in the defaulters' book. Men may be reduced to the second class for conduct as a punishment; or if recorded two consecutive six months as 'fair' in the 'Record of Conduct Book.' These classes for conduct and for leave are noted on each man's certificate when he leaves a ship; and as they operate on his treatment as an offender in another ship and his pension in the future, the filling up of certificates is not a thing to be lightly done, but requires careful consideration and discrimination, in order that a really bad man may receive his deserts and be known, and one who has committed an accidental fault is not branded as wholly irreclaimable.

The 'Record of Conduct Book' is filled up on the 30th June and 31st December in each year, the man's *conduct* being noted; and on the 31st December there is also a column for his *character*, which is copied on to his certificate. There is a distinction between *conduct* and *character*. Many men will conduct themselves well and merit 'good,' but their character may only be 'fair,' and *vice versa*. Many circumstances may cause a man to conduct himself navally bad for a time, who is really a decent and respectable character, though there are some naval offences which will only be committed by a man whose character is bad. This distinction between character and conduct is, we believe, a mistake, and one which the men will never understand; nor are we sur-

prised at it, for there are many officers who never realise it, and always record both in the book and on certificates—*conduct*. As all men's characters vary, we believe that *conduct* would be much the safer and surer test, resting as it does more on fact than opinion—namely, what offences the man has committed—and also as being what the men best understand. We hold *character* should disappear from all record; for character is a personal thing, and the more we eliminate personal opinions and feelings from the Royal Navy the sounder will be its discipline. If good characters can be obtained, all the better—everything should be done to help the men to be so; but their *conduct* should rule their lives, it being quite compatible with men of bad character to be well disciplined, that is, to conduct themselves navally well; for it is often remarked amongst naval officers, that though our men are undoubtedly now respectable, moral, and as a rule good characters, they continually find amongst them an utter want of discipline, which is more fatal to the service of the Crown than if they were bad characters.

There are substantial rewards open to every A.B. and those above him, in the shape of good-conduct badges, carrying with each badge 1*d.* a day. To obtain the first badge a man must have served either as ordinary or A.B. for three years, the last two years being recorded as 'very good' on his certificate, and he must be an able seaman. The second badge is obtained after eight years' service, having worn the first for the last two years with 'very good' character; and the third is obtained after thirteen years' service, having worn the second for the two last years with 'very

good' character. Should a man as a punishment be deprived of a badge, he must behave well for six months, having no offence recorded against him, before it is restored; and as he must wear a badge for two years immediately before getting another, this deprivation of badges pulls on men with different severity, and has to be taken into consideration; for a man who loses his first badge after five years' service and one who loses it after seven years' suffer differently. The former can regain his badge and have his second at eight years' service; but the latter at the best cannot get the second badge until after nine and a half years' service; and yet the punishments when awarded would look the same, and therefore just. It is these things, which often seem right at the time, but long after the events are found by the intricacies of the regulations to press hard, that cause much of the discontent—we may say dislike—that we fear a large body of men-of-war's men bear to the naval service.

There is also the subject of 'long service and good-conduct medals and gratuities.' For a man to obtain these some one invented the word 'exemplary,' which has caused, and will always cause, diversity of opinion as to whom it should be used. Can a boy or lad be an 'exemplary' character? or should it only be given to those who lead as examples of respectability, manner, and conduct? Is any one who never has an offence recorded against him an 'exemplary' character? And what offences may be passed over as not affecting a man's title to 'exemplary'? are questions asked over and over again since the word has been introduced. The word 'exemplary' has all to do with a man's character; and as no one's conduct

can be better than 'very good,' we look on it as superfluous, and as having arisen out of a striving after an ultra-respectability, which, worthy and desirable in itself, should not be made paramount in a disciplined service. The men who bear the burden and heat of the day, the seamen and petty officers, get so shut out from the reward it carries with it: some trivial forgetfulness in their 'part of the ship,' something wrong aloft, will in many cases prevent a man at the end of the year being awarded 'exemplary.' We believe it will be found that the mass of men awarded that character are the people who are below always,—the stewards, servants, bandsmen, artisans, and suchlike; very well-behaved men without doubt, but the regulations for whose rewards should not run side by side with the bluejackets and marines.

The character of 'exemplary' is not to be given for the year a part of which a man is in the second class for conduct, or disgraced, deprived of badge or good-conduct medal, confined in the cells, imprisoned by the civil power, or placed below the privileged leave-list. It may be added, no man would have his conduct called 'very good' for the year during which any of the above occurred.

Ten years of continuous 'exemplary' character will entitle a man to a medal, and fifteen years of continuous 'exemplary' character to a gratuity, provided he has never, during the whole of his previous service in time reckoning for pension, deserted, or been in the second class for conduct, or imprisoned by the civil power or otherwise, or been awarded a character inferior to 'very good,' except one year of 'good' in his first five years of time reckoning for pension; and a man who in his early

years committed himself can obtain the medal without gratuity on completing fifteen years' continuous exemplary character, provided his conduct was never so bad as to be recorded 'bad' or 'indifferent.'

Should a man who wears a good-conduct medal be deprived of a good-conduct badge, it is left to the discretion of the captain whether he also retains or loses the medal; but if allowed to *keep* the medal, he may not *wear* it until he regains the badge; should he not obtain the badge for twelve months, at the end of that time the medal is forfeited. Notices to these effects of suspension or forfeiture of medals are to be made on the certificates. On behalf of the men who had been serving for years when the word 'exemplary' was introduced, it is laid down that the term 'very good' is to be considered in the retrospect as standing for the new word.

The bluejackets and marines in the Royal Navy are therefore allowed to go on shore as often as possible, receive good-conduct badges and promotions when they conduct themselves well, and for continuous good conduct medals and gratuities. On the other hand, the restrictions on them are great, both rewards and restrictions being so bound up with orders and regulations, that the intricacies are difficult to unravel, and require the acumen of a lawyer to understand. We fear in many cases the men find that slight accidents of conduct often bear on them in after life more heavily than they expected, and we would urge that whatever movement takes place to enforce discipline should aim at simplicity.

The discipline of the Royal Navy is no unimportant matter, and to know how to maintain true discipline is one of the most

difficult things officers have to do. Some are never able to do it. To a few it comes instinctively; but, strange to say, this most difficult work in a naval officer's life is what he is never taught, beyond what can be gathered from the Admiralty instructions on the subject, which, we fear, are not read until late in life. It may, however, be an officer's lot to serve with captains who have the ability to maintain true discipline, and he may remember the precepts laid down. On the other hand, he may not notice the many little things that a good disciplinarian will rule, or he may when serving with such a one have been too young to realise what was done. Again, an officer may never serve with those who know anything about the subject; and yet a time comes in every naval officer's life when he finds himself in a responsible position, the discipline of some ship being mainly dependent on him. If he happens to have the perception of what is wanted, he may work it out; if not, all goes smoothly for a time, but at some critical moment there is a breakdown, and his career is practically over. For an officer who is unable to maintain discipline should never be allowed to rise in his profession.

In conclusion, we would point out that there is in the Royal Navy a large body of excellently behaved men, though, as a distinguished naval officer pointed out some years ago to his brother officers, good behaviour did not mean good discipline, and that as the men had been found intelligent, respectable, sober, and moral, many were satisfied, and quoted these qualities as signs of their discipline; whereas it was these very qualities which made them self-satisfied, and caused them to be always resenting whatever

orders they did not like—in fact, badly disciplined. We fear as the men have become better morally, so have they been more difficult to discipline; for in our free country public opinion rules the inner life of all, and within certain lines the Royal Navy must be looked on as a school whose members have of their own free will devoted their lives to the public good, to carry out which self has to be subordinated. Therefore we trust all complaints from those in the Royal Navy will be received with much caution, and the cases inquired into on broad grounds generally before an opinion is formed—looking carefully into their inner life, remembering it is better one individual should suffer for the State, than that the State service should receive a weakening blow. Officers and men in the Royal Navy should understand they have much to bear personally, freedom of speech being curtailed; but that, though all trivial troubles will not be listened to, when they feel hardly pressed it is their own seniors who enjoy the privilege, having the power and the will, to lessen evils; and if no redress from the head of the service can be obtained, they must then bear the evil, feeling sure that there are considerations which prevent its being lightened. There can be no greater pride to a man than to feel he is soundly disciplined. To gain this end for all—helping those in the Royal Navy to bear their lot contentedly—we hope to see its rules and regulations become more simple and less difficult to understand, as well as measures taken whereby officers may receive better instruction in discipline, that most necessary part of their profession.

CLUB CAMEOS.

The Club.

DURING the last generation a great domestic revolution has been gradually taking place, which promises to effect no unimportant changes in the constitution of English social life in the latter part of the nineteenth century. As a people, we have been so long accustomed to pique ourselves upon the strength of our domestic affections, upon our more solid characteristics, and upon our devotion to the attractions of our own fireside, that in spite of circumstances somewhat calculated to dispel this national belief, we still wrap ourselves in our superior virtue, and congratulate ourselves that we are not as our neighbour. We still vaunt the sanctity of an English home, and, with a sneer at the freedom of continental habits, pronounce the word to be untranslatable. We still view with pity the benighted 'foreigner,' who, ignorant of the fascinations of a pure, a bright, and a cultivated home-life, prefers in their stead the gossip of his café or the whist of his *cercle*, and think if he but crossed the Channel and studied our manners and customs how valuable might be the lessons he would receive. Here, in our respectable country he would see the *home*, that word for which his language has no equivalent, taking the place of external dissipation, and the household gods so warmly worshipped, that it would be deemed iconoclasm of the most ruthless character to depose them from the pinnacles on which they are set. Ah, happy England!

where your houses are so well built that your citizens are never tempted to quit them; where thoughtful servants attend to your every order, and give a dignity to the office of service; where your young women are so prudently reared that the most perfect house-discipline inevitably follows in the wake of marriage; where your young men, unselfish and industrious, are content to begin as their fathers before them began, and to wait till success has attended their labours before exchanging a severe economy for a graceful extravagance, and where all is nobleness of purpose, improvement of mind, and modesty of conduct. Ah, thrice happy country! What need for a Utopia so long as she exists!

I am afraid, however, that there is something unsound in this pæan of self-praise. It requires only the slightest amount of national introspection to find that we are not so different from our neighbour. Boast as we may of our superior tone of morality, the difference is but slight between London and Paris, London and Vienna, or London and St. Petersburg. With us secrecy and modern honour are now synonymous terms—'Do what you like, but be not found out,' is our maxim—and we conceal much which our neighbours expose. Thus we are more discreet; but discretion is not morality. We may vaunt our love of home-life as we please, but there are very strong indications that such love

is fast loosening its hold upon us. Great wealth, a long peace, the popular position occupied by trade, the rapid removal of the social barriers that used formerly to exist, have all succeeded in bringing us to the not very enviable condition described by Wordsworth :

‘Our life is only dressed
For show : mean handiwork of craftsman,
 cook,
Or groom ! We must run glittering like
 a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :
The wealthiest man among us is the best :
No grandeur now, in nature or in book,
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
Plain living and high thinking are no
 more.’

But of all the circumstances that are tending to cause English life to enter upon a new phase of existence, none is more powerful or more insidious than the establishment of the modern club. Fifty years ago it was the exception for a man to belong to a club. The fact of club-membership then implied some social position or distinction on the part of the individual. White’s, Brooks’s, Boodles’s, and a few other establishments, constituted the palaces in Clubland, and to obtain the *entrée* was a matter of no little difficulty. A man of humble birth, or one unknown to the committee, would have been sure of being blackballed. Clubs were then filled by those who belonged either to the same political party or the same fashionable coterie, the members of which were all known more or less to each other. The Tory patrician entered himself at White’s ; the Whig politician of good blood was a member of Brooks’s ; the country gentleman put his name down at Boodles’s ; the distinguished lawyer, divine, or man of letters, became a member of the Athenæum ; the soldier who was a field officer crossed over to the United Ser-

vice ; whilst the *roué*, the rake, and the dandy punted at Crockford’s. Save as a house of reunion, in which to write letters and to play high, a club in the past was of little service to its members. A club was then an exclusive circle, not a restaurant. Men visited it, they did not live in it.

But now, owing to the development of the wealth of the country, the spread of education, and the easier condition of the community generally, a great change has taken place in the kingdom of Clubland. When the advantages of that coöperative system, based upon debentures and supported by entrance fees and annual subscriptions, which we call club-life, became to be more fully appreciated, it was found that the demand exceeded the supply. In all the old-fashioned clubs the books were so crowded with names, that almost half a generation had to elapse before a candidate stood his chance of election. The only solution of the difficulty was to found new clubs. One by one, as years rolled on, the little shops in Pall Mall and St. James’s-street were demolished, and on their ruins rose stately edifices such as Venice in her palmiest days would not have been ashamed of owning. New political clubs, new professional clubs, new social clubs, sprang into existence, till what was a luxury in the reign of George IV. is now a comparative necessity.

Except at one or two establishments, which have always been reserved for those of recognised position, no man, provided he does not commit the unpardonable sin of keeping a shop (but as many warehouses as you please), and there be nothing known against his character, need despair of being a recipient of club favours. If he be blackballed at

one institution, there is little to prevent him from putting his name up at another. His father before him had but a limited choice ; whereas he, the son, can try his chance at several. Is he a Tory, but his blood not blue enough for White's—the father of the club system—he can still seek admission into the Carlton, the Junior Carlton, the Conservative, or St. Stephen's. Is he a middle-class Whig, and fearful of being 'pilled' at Brooks's, what is to prevent him entering his name at the Reform or the Devonshire ? Does he belong to one of her Majesty's services, his choice is embarrassing, for the list of naval and military clubs has recently been largely swelled. Still, what with the two United Service Clubs, the Army and Navy—more popularly known as the 'Rag'—the Naval and Military, and the East Indian United Service Club, 'an officer and a gentleman' ought to have little difficulty in getting quarters at one or other of these establishments. The officers in the Household Troops, however, make a coterie of their own at the Guards' Club. For the University man who hails from classical Oxford or mathematical Cambridge (Dublin, Durham, and the like need not apply), there is the choice between the University Club, the Oxford and Cambridge, or the New University Club. For the distinguished divine or lawyer, *savant* or man of letters, there is the Athenæum ; whilst for the actor, the literary man, and the man about town, the Garrick opens its hospitable doors. To him who does not wish to bind himself to any political party, but seeks a *cercle* of a purely social character, there are the Travellers', Boodles's, Arthur's, St. James's, the Windham, the Union ; and for Anglo-Indians

the Oriental, of curry celebrity. The Marlborough is for the friends of the Prince of Wales. The Park, the Badminton, and the Turf are the favourite haunts of the man of pleasure. The Portland is sacred to whist. In addition to this tolerably full list, there are a number of other clubs less well known, where the subscriptions are lower, and where the rights of membership can be claimed without any delay. At the accession of George IV. there were but some half-dozen clubs ; there are now close upon a hundred.

It is impossible that this increase in the club-system should have attained to its present height without affecting the current of English life, and altering the course of its stream. A brief comparison between the past and the present will show the nature of the change that has taken place. In former days, when Pall Mall and St. James's-street were crowded with the shops of tailors and of bootmakers, instead of the magnificent palaces that now occupy their site, men led a very different life from that now in vogue. A buck, a macaroni, a Corinthian—the 'swell' of the past—lounged into his club to write a letter or to take a hand at whist, and considered such an institution as an indispensable adjunct to the character of a man of fashion—as necessary as a knowledge of French, or to be a connoisseur of china or of old fiddles. But to the ordinary man, born in the ranks of the middle class, who had to look to a profession for his livelihood, a club was out of the question. The young man reading for the bar, the younger son in a government office, or the merchant's son in his father's counting-house, had to content himself with tastes and habits in accordance

with his income. He lived in modest lodgings or in chambers on the third floor of one of the Inns of Court. He dined off the joint at a tavern in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, and it was with him a red-letter day when he ordered a pint of wine. When he went to the play he patronised the pit, and even on such occasions

took advantage of the system of half-price. He seldom entered society, partly because it was expensive, and partly because he was not frequently invited. When he lounged down Bond-street or walked in the Park, he considered himself a dandy of the first water, and the anxiety he evinced as to his dress, and the extreme *hauteur*

of his swagger, plainly proved that his promenade was an event not to be lightly considered, nor one of frequent occurrence. If he was a sensible fellow he worked hard at his profession, and looked forward to the day when he could complete his modest career by matrimony. Solitary lodgings, tavern dinners, an absence of comfort, there was little in his life to make celibacy desirable, and

marriage was the haven for which he steered his bark. Thus, as soon as his income justified him in taking that important step, he married. If the parish registers of the earlier half of the nineteenth century be examined, it will be found that more than two-thirds of the marriages that then took place were entered into before the bridegroom had reached thirty. This is a fact which should not

be lost sight of by the social historian.

But if we turn from the past to the present how different is the picture! The continued prosperity of the country in spite of the increase in the cost of living has greatly benefited every class in the community. The lower orders receive higher wages and are better off than their fathers, whilst the incomes of professional people have more than doubled themselves. The introduction of a plutocracy among the aristocracy and the acreocracy, though it has tended somewhat to vulgarise our social institutions, has succeeded in developing a rate of expenditure which formerly did not exist. Money easily made is lavishly spent. Never was there a time in our history when heavier rents were demanded by the house-agents, higher prices by the horse-dealers, more exorbitant sums by carriage-builders, milliners, breeders of stock, jewellers, tailors, by everybody in short who ministers to the wants and luxuries of man. Since wealth enjoys now the power and advantages formerly possessed by high rank and high intellect, display has assumed the position of a social force. We give better dinners, ride better horses, live in better houses, drive about in better carriages, yet all not so much for the sake of the enjoyment of excellence, as for the exhibition of the pride of rivalry.

The consequence of this plethora of wealth has been to create throughout the community fictitious and artificial tastes. The customs and fashions of our fathers have been deemed capable of improvement. Quarters that had once been fashionable have been gradually deserted. The glory of Bloomsbury and Baker-street has departed, and Belgravia, where, amid its swamps at the beginning

of the century, men shot snipe, and South Kensington, once noted for its market-gardens, are now the districts favoured by the great world, and by those who wish to be thought within its circle. The old taverns of the Strand and Fleet-street and the neighbouring regions have given place to joint-stock hotels, where everything, including the wines, is brand new. The dinner-hour has become later and later, till to 'dine in hall' is like dining in the middle of the day. The young lawyers and students having found no advantage in living near their Inns, but, on the contrary, that they are far removed from the scenes of social dissipation, migrate to the west, quitting Lincoln's Inn, the Temple, and Gray's Inn, for the dingy back streets in the vicinity of St. James's. The long peace had caused the army to be dull, so that men as soon as they obtained their companies retired as a rule from the service. Thus it was, what with a large population of idlers, and an increasing luxury all around, that the advantages of the club system began to be seriously considered. Men wished to have comfort without extravagance, and attendance without responsibility. It was known that the clubs that had come into existence at the accession of George IV. were in the most flourishing condition, and that their members had all the advantages of an exquisitely appointed house without the expense and trouble of proprietorship. One by one, as it became more and more difficult to be admitted into the older establishments, new clubs sprang up, and have continued springing up, till now Clubland, from an exclusive and limited territory, has developed into an extensive and densely populated domain, offering hos-

pitality to all who have the slightest claim to that somewhat elastic title of 'gentleman.'

With the establishment of the club-system a great revolution has taken place in the domestic life of men, and especially of young men. Married men, accustomed to the refined and luxurious mode of existence in a

club, endeavour, so far as their means will permit, to reproduce its elegance and perfections within their own homes. They send their cooks to have a fortnight's training under the eye of the superb *clubchef*; in their appointments of the table they imitate the club; their wine-merchant is often one of the fraternity who

supplies the club; and to say 'they could not dine better at the club' is to confer the highest praise upon one's domestic arrangements. It was in the year 1850 that the club-system became popular, and that the club, from being a lounge, developed into a home. Let an elderly man hark back in his memory, and compare the dinners to which he was invited before the Crimean War,

and those to which he is now asked, and he will find that the superiority of the one over the other is due not a little to the host having been educated by his club.

But it is in the life of the bachelor that the introduction of clubs has caused the greatest change. The solitary lodgings and the tavern dinners have been relegated to the limbo of the past. All that is now needed is

a bedroom, for the club provides the bachelor with the rest of his wants. It matters little in what dingy street or squalid quarter a man lodges, for the club is the address, and society inquires no further. He need not purchase an envelope or a sheet of note-paper throughout the year, for the club provides him with all the stationery he can possibly require. There is no occasion for him to buy a book, a magazine, or a newspaper, for in his club he will find a library such as few private houses can furnish, and in the morning-room every newspaper and weekly review that has a respectable circulation. Does he wish to practise economy without privation, where can he dine better and cheaper than at his club? If, on the other hand, his tastes are those of a *gourmet*, and his income permits him, where can he better satisfy the cravings of a cultivated epicureanism? Both to the social Dives and the social Lazarus the club is a boon. The poor man enjoys life without the discomforts that ordinarily attend upon poverty, whilst the rich man receives to the full the value of his money.

To that large class which is neither rich nor poor, the club is a most cherished haunt. A young man on some four or five hundred a year enjoys advantages at his club which only the wealthiest outside can command. For an annual subscription, after having paid his entrance fee, of some eight or ten guineas a year, he finds himself part owner of a most splendid town house, where the tax-collector never intrudes, where repairs and dilapidations never concern him, where attentive servants wait upon his every order, where everything provided is of the very best, for it is worth the contractor's while to give satis-

faction, where retirement can be obtained without the depressing sense of solitude, and where companionship can be enjoyed without the dangers of intrusion—in short, a home always well appointed, always bright, and ready to cater for the simplest necessities or the most elaborate luxuries.

One of the most prominent consequences of all this perfection of organisation has been to render celibacy so desirable, that matrimony, instead of being the natural ambition of man, is now regarded by many in the light of a sacrifice. To marry, unless on an income which is the exception, signifies the exchange of club-life, with its pleasant gossip, its agreeable luxuries, and all its disciplined requirements, for the monotony of the domestic hearth, the worries of housekeeping, and the servitude of family restraint. Under the old order of things, when clubs were the exception, matrimony was regarded as the panacea for all the ills that bachelorhood was heir to, and a man married in order to have the companionship of a home. Whereas now, in that one word *club*, men find a safer substitute for the uncertain advantages of matrimony. 'Why should I marry?' asks the celibate. 'What are the advantages that marriage will bring to counterbalance its disadvantages? At present with my income I am well off, the club supplies me with all my wants, and my movements are unfettered. If I marry, I descend at once to be a poor man, with all the mortifications and privations of poverty. The charms of marriage are all very well, but what if they be followed by anxiety, by boredom, by disappointment? Such has been the fate of many; why should it not be mine? Even in a happy marriage there must be a vast amount

of monotony.' That this selfish and one-sided reasoning is daily gaining ground amongst us is evident from the decrease of marriages, and the increase of the club-system, not only in London, but in provincial towns.

I know no better illustration of these views than my friend Tommy Montague. An ex-cavalry

officer, who was compelled to send in his papers from certain financial circumstances over which he had no control, the future of Tommy was not particularly bright. An allowance of 150*l.* a year granted him by a surly elder brother, and the proceeds of his commission, could hardly be considered a state of affluence for a man who

had never made himself acquainted with the value of money, and to whom self-denial was an unknown virtue. As fortune would have it, one evening, at a certain set of chambers in the mansion of the Albany, Tommy had such a run of luck whilst playing *écarté* with a young peer who had just come into his possessions that my lord preferred, instead of mortgaging some of his acres to ob-

tain the necessary ready money, to allow Montague for the rest of his natural life the annual sum of five hundred pounds, to be paid quarterly by his lordship's solicitors. Tommy had no objection to the arrangement; and from that very hour up to the present time he has never touched a card; he is one of the very few who have made gambling pay, and he is quite content.

On this annuity, coupled with his brother's allowance, and the interest on the money he received for his commission, Tommy leads the quiet luxurious life of the club-man who spends his all upon himself. Tommy's maxim is that money spent upon oneself is never wasted. A garret in Bury-street is the only *pied-à-terre* he owns, for the club to him signifies lodgings, restaurant, country house, library, divan,—in fact, home and all. He hates sport, travelling, and society, and prefers the club in August and September to anywhere else without the club. To see him really wretched you must watch him when his beloved haunt is shut up for repairs, and he has either to go out of town or to betake himself to a strange club which has offered him hospitality. On such occasions he is thoroughly miserable, for it is not club-life that Tommy merely loves, but the life of his *own* club. He likes to breakfast at the same table, to read the newspaper in the same chair at the same window, to write his letters at the same table, to study the bill of fare at the same accustomed stand, and to have his dinner served by the same waiter at the same corner of the coffee-room. He is the strictest and most monotonous of Conservatives. Never was there a man whom it is more easy to find. You know the hour to a moment when he breakfasts, when he takes his 'constitutional,' when he smokes his first cigar, when he lunches, dines, writes his letters, reads, and goes through the programme of his thoroughly selfish but not uncomfortable life. He seldom enters society, and, with the exception of running down to Brighton or Folkestone for a fortnight, never visits the country. The club is his home, and, save

to take his daily stroll or to go to the theatre, of which he is very fond, he hardly stirs from its walls.

He is the great critic of the establishment, and we all feel that our comfort is safe in his hands. If the slightest thing goes wrong in the club—the ventilation imperfect, sanitary arrangements out of order, waiters inattentive, books missing, newspapers forgotten to be taken in, and the like—dip goes Tommy's pen in the ink, and the secretary is at once informed of the fact. At the annual meeting Tommy is a perfect Joseph Hume. He is irritatingly inquisitive as to every detail of club expenditure, and declines to be content with the brief statement in the circular issued by the committee. He wants to know why there should be a loss on the coffee-room, why so much should be spent upon snuff, toothpicks, and stationery, why the bills for repairs should be so enormous, why the salary of the secretary should be raised, why so little is added to the sinking fund, and all the rest of it. Nor will he be put off with a smile from the chairman, or with a little bit of flattery from some of the committee. He wants to know the reason why; and when Tommy 'wants to know the reason why,' the information he seeks must be lucid and complete before he is satisfied.

He is the terror of the club-servants, and backs his bill remorselessly if the joint which is down for eight o'clock appears half an hour late, or the wine-butler makes a mistake about the vintage that is ordered, or the waiter at his table is not perfect in his duties. Tommy knows to a day when everything is in season, and woe betide the steward if at the earliest moment there

are no plovers' eggs, no asparagus, no green peas, or no new potatoes ! He is acquainted with the price of every article, and instantly checks any attempt on the part of the club to overcharge its members. He is the great authority on club discipline and club etiquette ; but everything outside the club he views with supreme indifference.

Talk to him of some awful disaster, of some terrible commercial failure (provided he be not affected by it), of some great national loss, of the death of some great man, and his interest will hardly be excited ; but tell him that the excellent club cook has given notice, that a certain bin of rare wines has been drunk up and cannot be

replaced, that the hall-porter has broken his leg, that there has been a 'row' between certain members on the committee, or that Brown has not paid his debts of honour yet still persists in sitting down to whist, or that the member who steals the umbrellas has been caught in the act, or that Jones has been declared a bankrupt, and what will be the action of the committee, and you at once find

him a ready and suggestive listener. The club, the whole club, and nothing but the club, is the one creed of Captain Montague.

A hard selfish man, *à l'âge de la gourmandise*, the Caravanserai provides Tommy with all that he requires. He declines to dine out, because he says he gets a better dinner at the club for some ten or twelve shillings than at the best

houses in town ; and why, he inquires, should he bore himself with dull society when he can have the chat and ease of the smoking-room ? If he wants to be amused, he goes to the theatre ; if he wants to be instructed, he goes to the library : what has he to do with society ? he asks with a sneer ; he has no money, and he has not a pretty wife. He is perfectly content with the future before him, and as he makes his bed so has he no objection to lie upon it. In spite of shaving off his whiskers, cutting short his moustache, and freely using a wonderful hair-dye, Tommy is not the young man strangers would at first sight take him for. Quiet, comfort, good living, freedom from responsibility and anxiety, are the great desiderata of his life, 'and, begad, you don't get that by marriage !' he remarks. Talk to him of the solicitude of a tender wife, of the charms of home, of the soothing power of affection during the feverish hours of a long sickness, and he answers, 'O, of course ! but I get all that from a

nurses' institootion ; two guineas a week and beer-money.'

To convert Tommy is hopeless. He will never be made to see that he leads a purposeless selfish existence, occupied with petty details, making a business of trivialities, and ignoring all that is great and noble in life. He will dine and chat and moon the days away till the sands of the hour-glass are all run out, and the hearse stands before his lodgings to convey him to that great club which is open to us all, and from which no black ball exclude—the cemetery. Then the blind of his room will be pulled up, somebody else will sleep in his little bed, there will be a few allusions during the next fortnight in the club he loved so well to 'poor Tommy,' and then—well, then he will be as completely forgotten as if he had never been. Yet Captain Montague is under the impression that were he to quit the club it would at once fall to the ground. Such is the difference between the estimate we form of ourselves and that formed of us by other people.

WALKS AND TALKS IN PARIS.

Not being bound to observe the same precision of language as if I were drawing up an Act of Parliament—and there never was even an Act of Parliament through which you could not drive a coach and six—I therefore take the liberty of using the word ‘walks’ in its widest sense, embracing whatever our neighbours call ‘promenades.’ There are promenades *à pied*, *à cheval*, and *en voiture*; walks proper, rides, and drives. There are also promenades on the Seine, in boat or steamer. Moreover, there are promenades *en mer*; a row, or a sail, or a steamboat excursion, on the sea. But as geography teaches that the latter are impracticable in the environs of Paris, our present trips are confined to fresh water and *terra firma*.

While visiting large cities, at home or abroad, most people help out their ‘walks’ by means of cabs or their substitutes. Whatever be the representative of the vehicle ‘cab,’ it affords an easy, not unfrequently a lazy, way of ‘doing’ a strange town. You have only to get up anywhere, and ask to be taken to anywhere else. You are spared all study of maps and guide-books; you have no need to cudgel your brains, or fatigue your organ of locality, to find your way about. You learn a metropolis, as some people learn a language, by an expeditious process in six lessons, price one guinea or thereabouts. Your driver is your topographical tutor, who ‘crams’ you, or ‘coaches’ you, in educational phrase, with Paris, Munich, Florence, or Rome.

Unfortunately, like most royal roads to learning, this vicarious way of making acquaintance with a place leaves little impression on the memory. Lightly come, lightly go. It does not fix itself like hard-earned knowledge. Set a man who has travelled a long distance, through complex streets, in a strange city, in a cab, to find his way back again on foot, and the chances are that he will be unable to do so without assistance; whereas, if he had penetrated to those unknown regions with the sole aid of a map and the exercise of his innate faculty of ‘orientation,’ or the power of finding his bearings, he would probably be able to return to his starting-point, without taking one wrong turn to the right or the left. On foot, you keep a sharp look-out as you proceed, in order not to lose yourself; in a cab, having no fear of losing yourself, you hardly keep any look-out at all. So much for the intellectual scope of the question.

Do I never take a cab, then, on a voyage of discovery? Do I never indulge in the indolent facilities of that accessible mode of locomotion? In other words, am I fool enough to boast myself superior to human frailties and foibles? Of course I am not. But here the financial point of view forces itself upon our attention. Cabs cost money, which it might be convenient to apply to other purposes. A day’s cabbage amounts to a sum; a week’s cabbage comes to what would enable you to make a nice little trip or tour; and the true tourist will

cheerfully sacrifice his ease, in order to cover a greater extent of ground.

In Paris a great relief to the legs, a gain of time, and a saving of the pocket, without exactly allowing the wits to fall quite asleep, are offered by the omnibuses—are *offered*; but are seldom utilised by strangers. Indeed, the turning of Paris omnibuses to their full account is an art requiring practice, tact, topographical knowledge, and business habits. How many (the present scribe included) have looked with longing but despairing eyes at omnibus after omnibus which passed them, proudly hoisting the settling label 'Complet,' till they hopelessly took refuge in a cab! And yet by cleverly catching your omnibuses, you may do as much promenading work with them for sous, as you can in cabs for francs. The difference is worth pocketing, if not for economy's, at least for pride and pleasure's sake. In temperate and not rainy weather, the top of an omnibus is, for men, an observatory far preferable to the inside of any shut-up carriage whatever.

The disappointments of pedestrians in search of an omnibus in Paris mostly arise from their expecting to get taken up on the road. They *may* so get taken up, at dull times of the year or the day; but whenever there is any run on those vehicles, the only way of making sure of places is to go to the fountain-head or starting-point, where, if you find an omnibus full, you are certain that another will arrive in five minutes or less. Besides the starting-points, there are intermediate stations, where you can take your place and wait your turn.

Here you require to know what line of omnibuses, starting

whence, will take you where you want to go. Having laid out your plans for the day, the needful information is easily obtained, either from a guide-book or at your hotel. After a few trials you will soon fall into the system, until, perhaps, you become so smitten with it as to ride backwards and forwards, and round and round, for the sake of taking the air at so cheap a rate.

The course of each individual's movements per omnibus must of course be guided by the spot in Paris where he happens to have taken up his residence. Let us suppose the visitor to be lodging in the region which is specially occupied by hotels; namely, in the Place de la Bourse, the Rue Richelieu, or their immediate neighbourhood. And no time of the year is better suited for those walks than the month of September. October will often do, if there have been no heavy gales or pelting rains; but September is much safer and surer. The dog-days are over; in the public gardens the foliage plants have attained their full beauty, while flowers still remain plentiful. The theatres, which had closed during summer, have now reopened; and, although it is not too hot to eat, it is still hot enough to make drinking pleasant. Paris is full, not of aristocratic and fashionable Parisians, but of native vacationists and passing strangers. Indoor entertainments have been resumed, while outdoor amusements are still in full swing.

'By all means go and see the Buttes-Chaumont,' a friend once advised, when I was starting for Paris.

'Certainly I will,' was my reply—and I did not.

Many things in Paris are a fair excuse for anybody's not going to see anything else. But although

the Buttes-Chaumont is a sight to be seen, there are good reasons for its being missed by many strangers. It is out of the way; *i.e.* it is distant from their usual places of resort; it is not in the neighbourhood of anything else they are likely to go to see, and they doubt its being worth seeing for itself alone; and thirdly, it is not fashionable. Reasons for seeing it are, that it is still little known and comparatively new, as well as that it is a remarkable instance of the conversion of a haunt of vagabonds, a den of thieves, a receptacle of offal, into the most picturesque public walk in Paris. Afterwards, being in Paris, conscience pricked me, and I resolved to make the discovery of the Buttes-Chaumont. Not knowing how to get there, I adopted the old resource and took a cab; and a long way it is, all uphill, from those parts of Paris where men do congregate. You may reach it, as I did subsequently, economically, thus:

From the Place de la Bourse, or the Rues Montmartre, Vivienne, or Richelieu, or the Boulevards Montmartre or Des Italiens—in whichever of them you happen to be located—walk (it is only a mere step in a metropolis) to the famous (in diligence days) Place de Notre Dame des Victoires, which is one of the most curious ‘squares’* in Paris, seeing that its shape is oval. Arrived there, search for the Rue de Catinat, leading out of it, where you will find an omnibus terminus. Get into, or mount, an omnibus for Belleville, and stick to it until it reaches its other terminus. It will take you across a very busy and crowded

part of Paris, by the Rue d’Aboukir, bringing you out on the Boulevard at the Château d’Eau, with its flower-market and palatial barracks.

At that point the Boulevard bifurcates; or rather a new boulevard has been made to branch off the old one. If you wanted to go to the cemetery of Père la Chaise (it smells bad in hot weather, and cannot be a wholesome walk to take), you would get down and follow the Boulevard du Prince Eugène; if your object was to visit the Jardin des Plantes, the paradise of soldiers, nursemaids, and bears, you would do the same, and turn to the right by the Boulevard du Temple. As you wish to see the Buttes-Chaumont, you simply sit still. You then thread the Rue du Faubourg du Temple, famous for kick-ups and rows, until, penetrating a region ever more and more unfashionable, as is evident to the most unpractised eye, the omnibus finally comes to a stop, having carried you through that long line of *terra incognita* for the small sum (on its top) of one penny halfpenny, or fifteen centimes. As Herschell sounded the heavens with his telescope, so do you sound Paris by means of your omnibus.

Hence to the Buttes-Chaumont is a short and easy walk, although uphill, and you will have no difficulty now in finding your way, especially if you are able to ask it. You soon reach a lodge; and all the six lodges of this picturesque park, though similar in style, are different in design. You enter, free to wander, to rest, and to enjoy yourself, but not free to do exactly as you like. The rules placarded at each entrance-gate are worth perusal, because they have been laid down by the Administration of *all* the promenades

* The word ‘square’ is naturalised in Paris, like ‘coke,’ ‘sport,’ ‘all right,’ and many other Anglicisms. Before we laugh at an oval square we ought to remember that most of our squares are parallelograms, some long enough to make several squares.

of the city of Paris, and therefore are to be observed in all.

It is formally forbidden, for instance, to lop or cut the trees and shrubs. As a further security against depredations, it is also prohibited to traverse such public walks and promenades with bouquets obtained from private gardens, without a regular written permit. In the case of any infraction of this rule, the branches, bouquets, or flowers are to be seized by the keepers, without prejudice to the legal proceedings to be taken against all such delinquents. It is clear that if everybody took only one leaf, the poor trees and shrubs would soon be naked. The time-table of these Parisian walks is sufficiently wide for all reasonable walkers. The gates of the squares and gardens enclosed by iron railings are open to the public from six in the morning till ten at night from the 1st of May up to the 1st of October; and from seven in the morning till eight at night during the other months of the year.

The site of this park was once a group of plaster quarries, enabling the landscape gardener to create scenery something after the Derbyshire type. Fancy a vast hollow, almost an amphitheatre; fill a good portion of the bottom with a lake, into which lake shoot out a promontory cliff; and you have a general idea of the Buttes-Chaumont. Its other points are mere details and accessories. The lake is fed by a cascade falling from the highest point of the amphitheatre through a vaulted cavern hung with stalactites, and then, after it has reached the ground, trickling away between stepping-stones. When I say that the waterfall feeds the lake, I mean that it does its best to feed it; for the lake, being leaky, is insatiable. It is in the condition

of a lake with a sieve for its bottom. Beneath it are cavernous quarries and grottoes; and however skilfully puddling-work may be done, everybody knows through what a tiny cranny water will ooze out.

The cliff jutting into the lake is a masterpiece—an imitation of the needle and the natural archway in the rock which stand on the shore of Etretat in Normandy; only, by way of incongruity, the cliff is crowned with an ideal edifice composed of eight Corinthian columns, which may be taken as a development either of the temple of Vesta at Tivoli, or of the lantern of Demosthenes at Athens. Never mind which, it is a remarkable look-out. In Cornwall there is an awful chasm, to the brink of which strangers are sometimes led blindfold, to try the effect on their nerves when allowed to take a peep. I should like to conduct a novice, with his eyes bandaged, to this culminating point of the Buttes-Chaumont, to enjoy his surprise at the panorama thus suddenly revealed to him.

In spite of the art with which art is concealed, such scenery is obviously artificial. Indeed it can hardly be otherwise in a place of public resort, where suspension, stone, and iron bridges, *cafés*, refreshment-rooms, hired chairs, public seats, and other social and unsocial conveniences are matters of necessity. We ought not to cavil at its factitious rockeries grafted on the natural; its staircases imitating mountain mule-paths; its artistic, if artificial, brooklets leaping down in a succession of tiny waterfalls, and planted with wild aquatic and moisture-loving plants, such as iris, colt's-foot, sweet sedge, and bulrush; its tufts of ferns (*Os-munda*, and others) cleverly stuck where spray and vapour can reach

them, and where acquisitive fingers cannot. They may not exactly harmonise with gay masses of annuals and greenhouse plants, nor with formal thickets of rhododendrons, nor even with trim ivy-bushes grown as standards; but they help to constitute a whole which, if the least aristocratic, is certainly the most scenic airing-place in Paris.

It is a pleasure to behold congregated here holiday-makers of low degree, old folk, convalescents, and children enjoying an afternoon out of school. Those are probably the parties addressed by a notice affixed to a little iron gate on the cliff: 'It is expressly forbidden to penetrate into this staircase, TRAPS being set there.' I know a French forest, in which a wolf is annually rumoured to have made his appearance, namely, just when the nuts are ripe and the children rush at them like swarms of locusts. Nobody ever saw that wolf, but everybody has seen somebody who has. I suspect the traps of the Buttes-Chaumont have the same phantom character.

The name of this park correctly describes the natural condition of its site. A *butte* is an irregular mound of earth, such as would be formed by rubbish thrown out of an excavation. *Calvus Mons* is Latin for Bald Mountain, in French *Mont Chauve*, abbreviated into *Chaumont*. Buttes-Chaumont, so interpreted, gives a perfect idea of what the place was in times gone by. Its baldness, however, was crowned with a gibbet which is famous, or infamous, in history. It was not a single simple gibbet, like those which our public, until lately, were accustomed and delighted to see at work; but a complex construction of pillars of masonry, forming three sides of a square, with three stories of

beams wherewith to execute people on the spot, as well as to gibbet bodies that had been executed elsewhere. At the present date, the pleased population takes its ease where the most horrible scenes were formerly enacted, and that by the most exalted personages—by Catherine de' Medicis and her royal son, to wit. It was here that Charles IX. asked his fastidious courtiers, 'Does not a dead enemy always smell sweet?'

The omnibus which brought you hither for fifteen centimes will take you back to the Place de la Bourse for the same reasonable charge. You will have had, I hope, a pleasant trip for the small cost of threepence sterling. As a contrast, let us take, another day, the omnibus for the Parc Monceaux, by walking from the Place de la Bourse, along the new Rue du Dix Decembre, reaching the Boulevard in front of the New Opera House, and following the Boulevard to the left in the direction of the Madeleine. The Rue Royale leads from the Madeleine to the Place de la Concorde; in the Rue Royale you will find omnibuses for the Parc Monceaux.

This public walk is comparatively small; instead of being picturesque it is distinguished by the highest possible finish of gardening, grass-plots bright as in the Emerald Isle, and expensive plants lavished with a profusion which would be called reckless by those who do not know what resources Paris has at her command; for Paris does her gardening on a grand scale and by wholesale, having a propagating ground or horticultural reservoir, where plants are multiplied and kept in winter quarters by millions. Indeed, the choiceness of the flowers displayed bears witness to the richness of the resources available. The velvet turf is the result of

watering with jets of artificial dew. Besides horizontal pipes, whence spurts this dew, on the lawns are planted movable stems, which display what look like fireworks (were they not executed in water) for the due and ceaseless refreshment of the turf.

Unlike the Buttes-Chaumont, the Parc Monceaux lies in a fashionable and showy quarter, and is the resort of well-dressed, if not well-to-do, people; for all is not gold that glitters. It is only the flowers who do not keep up appearances beyond their means. Like the Tuileries Garden it has its colony of ring-doves, so tame in Paris, so wild and shy almost everywhere else.

On leaving the Parc Monceaux, it is worth stepping (and it is only a step) to the Russian church, to which its bright gilt cupola will guide you. It is small, but rich and highly decorated, and strikes you by its peculiarity of having neither chairs nor benches on its open area. According to the Greek ritual, people worship standing or kneeling, even prostrate, but not seated. Sitting, the position of ease and indifference, is indecorous, they hold, in the house of God.

There are two other gardens in Paris which you will make a point of seeing, though they lie at opposite extremities of the town; namely, the Jardin d'Acclimatation and the Jardin des Plantes. To reach the former, go to the Place du Louvre, and take an omnibus inscribed 'Courbevoie.' After passing the grand arch of the Champs Elysées, ask the conductor to set you down at

the nearest point to the Jardin d'Acclimatation; in fact, it is only a few steps from the Avenue along which you are driving. You can return to the heart of the town in the same economical way, waiting for the omnibus (a minute or two) on one of the seats in the Avenue, which are never crowded. I do not like the Jardin d'Acclimatation myself. It is not to be compared (except in extent) with our Zoo, nor with those of Antwerp, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam. It is pretentious, and is not popular.

I do like the Jardin des Plantes; admission free. It is popular, unpretentious, instructive, and historical. At the Madeleine, you will find omnibuses for the Bastille (i.e. for the site once occupied by that place of retirement), whence to the Jardin is only a walk. Or you may reach the Jardin itself by 'bus. Once within it, your tastes will lead you 'after your kind,' according as you are a botanist, a zoologist, or a time-killer. A useful and interesting hour may be spent in looking over the economical plants. Persons likely to travel in hot countries should be able to recognise such things as cotton, cinnamon, coffee, sugar-canes, yams, and so on, when they see them growing. At your dinner-hour, or earlier, the Jardin des Plantes is closed to the public. After dinner, with the cash economised by carrying out my system of 'bussing or tramwaying long distances, you can indulge in a cab-drive along the Boulevards, or light your evening cigar in the Champs Elysées.

A VISIT TO THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE.

It is more than a hundred years ago since that prince of letter-writers, Horace Walpole, wrote to his friend, Richard West, that he had ridden three leagues to see the Chartreuse, 'reputed the finest convent in the world.' He goes on to say: 'Did you ever see anything like the prospect I saw yesterday? I never did. The road, West! The road, winding round a prodigious mountain, surrounded with others, all shagged with hanging woods, obscured with pines or lost in clouds; below, a torrent breaking through cliffs and tumbling through fragments of rocks; sheets of cascade forcing their silver speed down channelled precipices, and hastening into the roughened river at the bottom. Now and then an old foot-bridge with a broken rail, a leaning cross, or the ruins of an hermitage. All this sounds too bombast, too romantic for one that has not seen it, too cold for one that has. If I could send you my letter post between two lovely tempests that echoed each other's wrath, you might have some idea of this lovely roaring scene as you were reading it. We stayed two hours—wished for a painter, wished to be poets.'

This last remark of the lively Horace was superfluous, since Gray was his companion; and so deep was the impression made on the poet's mind by this grand mountain retreat, that when he parted from Walpole in Italy, he paid a second visit to the Chartreuse in the summer of 1741, and left as a legacy to the monks the beautiful alcaic ode written in the album

of the monastery, and well known to the classical scholar. Since the days of these two distinguished travellers, few of the many hundreds, who yearly pass through Chambéry and Aix-les-Bains, linger or turn aside to visit the cradle of the Carthusian order; but at Grenoble a wish is kindled, if it does not already exist, when the rare and valuable mss., the exquisite illuminated missals one sees in the fine town library, attract attention, and one learns that they were the treasures of the convent until at the time of the Revolution they were moved for safety to the town, where they are now housed and cared for in a noble room worthy their priceless value.

We had lingered in the capital of Dauphiny with the fixed intention of making an expedition to the spot, and had made arrangements with the proprietors of the four-horsed omnibus to hire the interior of his conveyance for our party of five for the sum of fifty francs, not of course including the coachman's fee. This was the price asked for an open carriage; but it was early in the season, the mornings cold, and weather uncertain; consequently a closed carriage was preferable for the first part of the road as far as St. Laurent, a lighter open conveyance being promised for the drive through the pass.

We had no reason to repent our bargain; the roads were still heavy in places from recent rain or melted snow, and no single pair of horses could have carried us there and back in the day.

The omnibus had been repainted and relined for the coming season, as it goes daily to St. Laurent and back; we had therefore the benefit of this, being early visitors. At seven o'clock, upon a bright and promising-looking morning, we were all ready for a start, when our coachman made a petition. Would we admit a gentleman for a few miles of the road? He was so very *comme il faut*, or he would not ask it. Of course we could refuse—the interior was ours; but of course we did not. M. —, a gentleman connected with the Musée, proved a very agreeable companion for the short time he journeyed with us.

There is only one other way of reaching the Chartreuse besides the road we were taking, and that is by a mule-path over the mountains from a place called Sappey. Later in the year it would be pleasant to vary the excursion by returning to Grenoble by that shorter, but of course more fatiguing, route. Half-way between Grenoble and St. Laurent, at a place called Voiron, where there is a railway-station, we changed horses, and whilst this was being done were glad to get out of the carriage, and, mounting the hill over which our road lay, take a last look at the Graisivaudan valley, through which we had up to this point been passing along a tolerably level road. The sunshine and blue sky of southern France can make anything look beautiful; but it would be difficult to surpass this valley, backed by its range of grand and varied hills. From this point we turned our faces northward; and, after a continued ascent for some time, seemed to find ourselves again on a level road, but in a less interesting country, well cultivated and well wooded, with somewhat of the park-like character of England; so

we subsided from our previous state of admiration to silence, as if to reserve ourselves for what we were to see later.

St. Laurent is a small village, situated at the entrance of the gorge or pass of the Chartreuse; and as all travellers, save those who cross the mountains on foot, must pass through it on their way to the monastery, it is in summer lively enough, and boasts two small hotels, where a very fair dinner or lunch can be procured, but sleeping accommodation is of the roughest.

Here we descended from our omnibus, and were speedily furnished with a small light *char-à-banc*, drawn by an active pair of little horses; and promising to be back at St. Laurent by four o'clock, we resumed our road. The air was crisp and sharp; we were glad of shawls and wraps. We went merrily and rapidly along for some little time, passing a picturesque forge, a mill, and various saw-pits; for the woods dotting the sides of this grand defile are now Government property, and well looked after, thinned, and protected. The sound of the axe, the cheerful voices of the woodmen, now break what was once a vast and awful solitude. St. Bruno, who was born early in the eleventh century, and who was studying and teaching at Cologne when our Saxon England was learning to submit to her Norman conquerors under the first William, longed, after many years of labour and doubtless much vexation of spirit, for some spot secure from every interruption or worldly temptation.

He was at Grenoble in the year 1084, with several companions desirous, like himself, to withdraw from the world. Hugo, bishop of that place, conducted him to a

spot, at that time almost inaccessible. Not even those who trod the difficult and dangerous mule-path a hundred years ago can realise the toil of the mere ascent to that upland meadow-land, four thousand feet above the level of the sea, surrounded by dense forests and snow-clad peaks, where the first monastery was erected. This was not, however, the site of St. Bruno's first cell; but higher yet, nearer the snow, the wolves, and the bears, did he and his six companions fix their retreat. The rudest of huts, a cave in the rock, sufficed for shelter at first. A chapel now marks the venerated spot.

Here these first Carthusian brethren led a life of simple toil, working in the dense woods around, which at the request of the bishop had been ceded to them by the neighbouring seigneurs. Their wants were few, but all their energies were taxed to provide for them, and when the hours of prayer or labour were over their sole recreation was the contemplation or study of Nature in her most beautiful yet most terrible aspect. Remote as they were from the haunts of men—a small hamlet of rude peasants, Cartusa, which gave the name to the district, being the only inhabited place—it was not long before curiosity or veneration attracted new-comers to the spot, and many remained, content to follow the practice and imitate the piety of these holy men.

In process of time a church was built on the only piece of level ground in that desolate region, a sunny verdant meadow, closed in by mountains like a *cul de sac*, and round the church the monks built their cells by twos and threes; and thus the first monastery grew: a building which, although destroyed by an ava-

lanche in 1138, has been the pattern for each successive structure there, as well as in other parts of Europe.

But St. Bruno was not permitted to remain long in peace. His old pupil, now Urban II., called him to Rome. He obeyed the summons of the Pope; but the life of a court and the profligacy of the age disgusted him. Again and again he solicited leave to retire; but it was not until 1094 that he was allowed to go and undertake his last work, the founding another Chartreuse in the solitudes of Calabria at Torre, where he died.

He left the example of his pure and learned life to his brethren; but the rules that regulate this celebrated order were not fully perfected until two hundred years after his decease, although their food and clothing have been from the first much what they are now—a dress of heavy woollen texture; a tunic of the same, with large sleeves; cassock and cowl over it; no linen and no stockings. The colour of that worn by the fathers, who are all of them priests, is white or the whitish colour of flannel or serge; that of the lay-brothers, who do not become priests unless manifesting special vocation for it, is dark brown.

Their food consists of fish, fruit, vegetables, and farinaceous substances, no meat being allowed except in case of illness; they have but one repast a day, which is taken in their cells, except on Sundays and festivals, when they dine together in the refectory. The meal is passed in silence, one of their number reading aloud from the Bible or some devotional work.

We had time to think of all these things as we drove along a road increasing every moment in

grandeur and beauty; the rocky stream, the Guiers, was now a deep and silent pool, and now a mad torrent falling over lofty rocks in cascades, catching the sun and sparkling between the thick foliage overhanging its banks. Every moment the windings of the road presented a change of scene to our delighted eyes; and soon we reached a point where the pass seemed almost closed by lofty rocks rising sheer from the river on either side.

In former years this narrow space was closed by gates and guarded by sentinels. It was the entrance to the desert, and beyond it no woman was permitted to penetrate. The gates are gone. The road passes now under an arch formed by blasting the rock, and the rule laid down in 1137 by Guigues, general of the order, has since the Revolution at least been modified; it ran thus: 'We will never permit women to enter; we know that neither the first model from the hands of God nor the sage nor the prophet have been able to escape their caresses and deceits; and indeed one knows well that one cannot conceal fire in one's breast without one's garment being burnt, or walk on burning coals without scorching the soles of one's feet.'

Well, in the nineteenth century the monks are more courteous to the fair sex, or less afraid of them; for they give them a kind welcome at any rate *outside* their walls.

And now some large stone buildings well walled in, the gates surmounted by the cross and globe of the order, are passed by us on our right. These are the farm-buildings and distillery of the monks, who in 1816, when deprived of the greater portion of their lands and woods, extending at one time to the village of St.

Laurent, commenced manufacturing their famous cordial or liqueur for sale. A strange source of income for men so abstemious that they even deny themselves coffee; it is, however, a profitable one: the money thus accruing to the monastery is devoted to the expenses of the establishment, any residue being spent on works of benevolence.

In 1864 the Pope prohibited the sale of Chartreuse by the monks; but this prohibition was either disregarded or removed, as the traffic still continues. It has been said that the cordial sold since that date is not the same as that originally made; but as the monks never published their recipe, who can tell? Some modification as to strength may have been made, but it is not likely that the original recipe was lost; on the contrary, we are told that great care is taken of it, that it is in the keeping of the general of the order, safe under lock and key behind an altar, and that great state and ceremony are observed in dealing with it.

Imitations of the Chartreuse are made and sold in various parts of France. In that manufactured by the monks the finest brandy is used; but its peculiar flavour and excellence are due to the berries or aromatic herbs which grow on the mountains in the neighbourhood of the cloister, and it is in the selection and preparation of these ingredients, unattainable to other makers, that the monks' secret probably consists. The woods and slopes of these mountain regions are well known to botanists for their rare specimens, and in the album of the convent Jean Jacques Rousseau recorded that, 'J'ai trouvé dans ces lieux des plantes rares et des vertus plus rares.' Soon after passing these buildings, we were occasionally

stopped on our road by teams of bullocks dragging huge logs, or felled trees; and at one place a light carriage met us, and in it sat a white-robed father, the first we had seen.

'That,' said our driver, 'is the Emperor of Russia's cousin; he is going to Grenoble on business.' Afterwards we were told that this Russian monk is no relative of the Czar, but a former aide-de-camp and personal friend, and still in receipt of his pay. A little later and we reached the bridge of St. Bruno, which spans the torrent with one bold arch; we crossed it, and the river was now on our right. The banks on either side grew higher and steeper, clothed with pine and larch, innumerable wild flowers colouring the ground; and ever and anon an opening in these hills would show us a still higher range of peaks behind, their summits capped with snow.

At one place the road passes through a succession of five short tunnels, and at another our attention was attracted to an isolated rock of pyramidal or cone-like form, tapering up to a fine point. This is the Oiellet, and is surmounted by a light iron cross, which, as the story goes, was placed there by an adventurous Englishman. The rock rises there from the torrent to a height of several hundred feet, inaccessible from below, and divided from the road above by a space some yards wide; but climbing up a tree he swung himself on to it from its branches. The ascent was easy, but the descent he found too perilous and fearful for him; on one side the torrent, on the other the gap, which, if he failed to cross by a leap, was death. Two days, it is said, he remained on that frightful height, until by means of ropes thrown up to him, and secured in some manner to the

tree, he effected his escape from his awkward position.

Farther on again another cross, called from its colour 'La Croix verte,' marks where a *préfet* of Marseilles met his death by the falling of a rock. The last half mile or more of the road our driver was content that we should all descend from the carriage, and walk up what was a long-continued ascent between a fine wood or avenue of trees. With such foliage above, and the well-made well-kept road below, it was difficult to realise that we were approaching a spot chosen for its wildness and solitude; but ten minutes before, however, we had met a party of the monks walking, a sight which recalled the fact to us. The rule that in former years prohibited all speech to the brethren, save by special permission, has now been relaxed, and once a week they are allowed to leave the house for *le spaciment* or exercise, and whilst walking to converse with each other. The party we met did not seem to be availing themselves greatly of the privilege; there were ten or twelve of them at least, walking singly or two abreast, and no sound of human voices betrayed their approach till a turn in the road brought them in sight. They were mostly old or middle-aged men, with, as we thought, dull and heavy countenances; the brother who walked ahead of them, as if he was their leader, was a man of gigantic stature, and he held a rod or long stick in his hand. The road was very dirty at the point where we met, and the monks held up their heavy white woollen garments, like so many awkward old women. Our party inspired them with no curiosity; not one of them turned round to look after us.

At last the end of our journey through this most magnificent

pass was reached. We stepped out from the shade of the trees into full sunshine on this bright green meadow, with the old gray walls of the monastery before us. Beyond it the ground rose in a green slope, and was then closed in by woods in their fresh spring foliage, backed by magnificent peaks of snow, the Grand Som the most striking of the number, but so sheltered from wind, and so sunny the situation of this home of the 'silent brothers,' that even in these early May days violets, cowslips, and orchises were blooming in profusion round. How tranquil and silent it was! And yet this secluded spot had been the scene of violence, pillage, and oppression. The building before this one now existing had been burnt by the fierce Baron des Adrets, of whose courage, cruelty, and military talents many a tale is still told in Dauphiny. François de Beaumont, Baron des Adrets, embraced the Huguenot cause as much from hatred of the Guises as from religious conviction; like Lesdignières he was reconciled towards the close of his life with the government and Roman Church; but his reputation suffered by this submission, and he reaped no advantage from it. As a soldier he was so unsuccessful after his change of religion that he was asked once to explain the cause of this. The Baron sighed, and said in reply, 'With the Huguenots I had soldiers under me; with the Catholics only shopkeepers. I could not furnish reins to the former, and with the others I wore out my spurs.' It was nearly a hundred years after he had left it ruined and burnt that the monastery was rebuilt in 1676. Except a few arches in the cloisters, and a vaulted doorway, it is all of this date—plain, with no architectural

beauty; only remarkable, as Horace Walpole writes, from its primeval simplicity, or imposing from its extent and solidity, and the antique air that two hundred years' exposure to the storms of that region has given it. The building as we approached was on our right hand. We walked on to the farthest extremity; then turning suddenly to the right found ourselves at the gateway of the first court, behind which stretched the monastery in the form of two parallelograms, covered in by tent-shaped roofs of dark slate.

Some one rang the bell, which gave forth a hollow awakening sound noticeable in foreign buildings, but which startled us all. Then slowly in response to this summons the old door rolled back on its hinges, and a *frère* stood there clad in coarse dark-brown cloth to conduct the visitors within; but he shook his head at the ladies of the party, who were directed to a white house a little beyond the monastery.

Place aux dames. Let us describe the entertainments provided for their female visitors by St. Bruno's sons in the words of one of the party. She says:

'The glimpse we had of the dreary-looking courtyard somewhat consoled us for our exclusion, and we wended our way upon the sunny road to the white house on the left. The door stood open, and upon entering we were at once welcomed by two sisters of charity and invited in. One of them was old and plain, but gentle, and evidently the chaperon of the other and of a third sister whom we saw later, and who was of middle age, whilst she who received us and acted the part of hostess was the brightest, freshest, prettiest-looking creature it is possible to imagine in a nun's dress. O ye votaries of paint

and pearl-powder! why will ye not try the nun's recipe for a complexion! Nowhere have I seen such skins as I have done beneath the white or black coif of the convent; and what is their art? Why, early rising, temperate living, scrupulous cleanliness, and active habits! Here was this young creature before us, the picture of health and happiness, with lilies and roses and bright eyes, never seen together in our heated ballrooms.

'She led us first into a large room near the door, where we left our cloaks and parasols, and then into another equally spacious chamber at the end of a passage, where we found an Italian lady, who had arrived from Chambéry a little before us, sitting with her feet on a *chaufferette*; for there was no fire in the room, which, like most convent apartments, was plain and bare, but beautifully clean. Our kind hostess offered to light a fire; but we would not allow it, and preferred going out again, and strolling in the sun until the dinner was ready. We had not long to wait. Whilst loitering about we observed a man leave the monastery and approach the white house, carrying a basket evidently containing our dinner, which we had been told would be cooked there.

'We hastened back—our early breakfast and the mountain air had made us hungry—and on re-entering we found a table spread with dishes of dried fruits and preserve, salad, bread, delicious-looking butter, bottles of the clearest water, and decanters of red wine; so the monks did not mean to starve us.

'The dinner provided us was first-rate: excellent vegetable-soup, then a dish of fried fish—"the meat of the Chartreuse," observed our hostess—followed by an excel-

lent savoury omelette. By the time we had partaken of these dishes, with little interludes of bread-and-butter, radishes and salad, washed down by sundry glasses of the excellent *ordinaire*, we all felt we had dined well, in spite of the absence of meat, and some of us declined a custard pudding, which, however, proved so excellent, so delicately flavoured, that in the end all partook. This pudding was in fact a delicate attention on the part of the monks' cook to the ladies; for the gentlemen's dinner was precisely the same as that served to us, with the exception of the pudding; and we were also favoured by the charge being half a franc less per head—two francs, instead of two-fifty.

'When our hostess was satisfied that we would eat no more, nor drink any more red wine, she went out, and returned bearing a tray with three decanters of the celebrated liqueur, the pale, the golden, and the green, or elixir. The first is somewhat mawkish; the third too strong, and generally used as a medicine or cordial. The golden, of intermediate strength, is delicious, and is that seen at the tables of the rich. The meal over, we adjourned to the guest-room, which we had first entered, to inspect and purchase a few photographs or some trifle as a souvenir and a means of remunerating the sisters a little for the trouble they have in entertaining lady visitors. These good sisters of St. John from Grenoble had been but a few days installed; before long their numbers would be increased.'

Shortly after, the Italian lady started with a guide for St. Bruno's chapel, about half an hour's walk through the woods that clothe the mountain-side. Our time, we thought, would not allow us to venture so far; we

contented ourselves with an ascent to the highest point of the lovely meadow, whence we could look down upon the building we were not permitted to enter. From our point of view it seemed a long, low, and irregular-shaped mass; but it consists in reality of two parallelograms placed obliquely the one against the other, and forming thus an acute angle; we could descry the open space which we supposed to be the cemetery and the position of the church. Whilst observing all this, another party of monks passed us from out the woods, and reëntered. Two of them were comparatively young men. One of them looked at us, the other kept his eyes fixed on his book; and again the want of intelligence or interest in the countenances of these men struck us forcibly. It would seem, indeed, as if conversational interchange of thought was necessary to keep the countenance bright and intelligent. A celebrated Oxford scholar, alluding in a recent sermon to St. Bruno's and the Carthusian maxim, 'that men should only use their tongues for praying,' said, 'Men should at the same time take care lest in seeking to be angels they became less than men.'

Some alterations or additions were going on at one side of the house, and the labourers were being overlooked and directed by one of the fathers: his hood was drawn over his face, which was seldom turned our way.

Sitting quietly as we did on that sunny upland spot, watching the fleecy clouds as they sometimes hid the peaks from view, and sometimes rolled off, exposing new points, now showing us the Pic du Midi in the far distance, and now filling up the pass below and presenting the appearance of an ocean, it did not seem a

dull and dreary scene; the influences of civilisation have turned what was literally a 'howling desert' in St. Bruno's day into a calm and lovely solitude. Are the hearts of the recluses congregated there in accordance with the peace without? This was the question we asked ourselves as we speculated on the histories and lives of the fifty or sixty fathers of all nations gathered there for the remainder of their earthly existence. With our hands full of wild flowers we sat and looked and dreamed, until the old gates opened slowly again, and the Italian gentlemen and those of our party reappeared, one of whom thus described the interior of the monastery and their reception:

'When the door closed upon us we were led by the brother through a covered court into a long and ample hall, at one end of which was a sort of counter fitted up much like those at which the lady of a restaurant presides. Seated in the centre of this was a jovial-looking *père*, who greeted us pleasantly and presented a book, in which our names were inscribed, very like the police-sheet of the *feuille* at a French hotel. The album formerly used, and containing the autographs of Walpole, Gray, Rousseau, Chateaubriand, and many other illustrious visitors, was removed, in consequence of the vulgar offensive remarks written in it by a class of travellers who mistake impertinence for wit, or were so destitute of gentlemanlike feeling as to criticise the hospitality they had been ready to accept. The book closed, the monk reminded us that he dealt in the renowned liqueur, and offered each of us a glass before beginning our cold inspection.

'At the period of our visit, the Chartreuse contained about a hun-

dred monks, of whom between forty and fifty were fathers, consequently priests, wearing the white dress, and being generally men of condition. The remainder were lay-brothers of an inferior class, and clad in brown. In addition there are numerous servants, who are hired and dismissed at pleasure.

‘The head of the fraternity, who is also the superior of all the other Carthusian establishments, is called the general; he is replaced during absence by the vicar. The other offices are the procureur, who attends to secular business, the sale of the elixir, farm-produce, &c.; the coadjuteur, who receives strangers; the librarian, the sacristan.

‘The exercise of superior authority is the only difference between the members of the body.

‘We now commenced our survey of the building. On the ground-floor of this part of it are the rooms used for refectories for strangers; and by the side of them the cells for visitors remaining the night. These rooms are called the halls of Burgundy, Aquitaine, Germany, and Italy. Passing from these, under the guidance of the brother, to the first floor, we noticed as we went some fine old wainscoting, and the copies of Le Sueur’s pictures, now in the Louvre, illustrative of the life of St. Bruno. We reached the chapter-house, near which are the lodgings for the priors and generals of other houses, who may be summoned at any time to attend a chapter; and a smaller room called the *définitoire*, where business connected with the community is transacted.

‘Round the chapter-house hang portraits of the generals of the order, ranged in succession like the notabilities of any other confraternity; and at the end is an

empty frame, to be filled one day with the portrait of the existing general. A marble statue of St. Bruno adorns the room—a work of no special merit; but a bust near of some ecclesiastic merits attention: it is of the approved type of lean marked features, true to nature, and Donatello-like in execution.

‘We were next introduced to the library, by far the most agreeable apartment in the building. We traversed the great gallery, where hang plans of all the Chartreuses in Europe, and reaching the room, found the floor of a somewhat higher level than the entrance-way, forming a sort of *perron*.

‘The books were in many cases and in handsome modern bindings. No opinion can be formed of the value of a collection by a cursory survey; and the knowledge that at the time of the Revolution the rare and valuable mss. of the order had been removed to Grenoble, together with the modern air of the room, led one perhaps to think too slightly of its value. Our cicerone, however, informed us that the room was of older date than we supposed. The number of the books is about 6000; and as the early rulers of the order recommended the acquirement of books and the forming collections, the number will doubtless increase. Leaving the library we passed through some of the long corridors, one of which is more than 600 feet long, which connects the various parts of the building, and visited on our way two small chapels opening off from them. They were much decorated with church ornaments, recalling the manner of a chapel in the Ara Coeli at Rome of the middle period of Roman Catholic taste, less tawdry than the oldest arrangement, but quite untouched

by the chastening hand of later days. There are in all three chapels—La Chapelle domestique ou de Famille, La Chapelle de St. Louis, La Chapelle des Morts.

‘In the church there is nothing worthy of remark except a small amount of fine wood-carving, for which the monks of old were famed. The old altar has been removed to the cathedral at Grenoble; the choir of the church is reserved for the fathers, a tribune in front of the altar for strangers, the lay-brothers and servants using the other parts of the building; prayers are said three times a day.

‘The houses of the general and the superior officers are all together at one end of the monastery, each having a separate garden and terrace. These we did not see, nor were we shown any of the cells of the fathers, of which there are more than fifty, thirty-five opening out from the great cloister, which forms a large square, and is lighted by one hundred and thirty windows; we were told, however, that they consisted of three compartments—a study, a sleeping-room, and a workshop opening into a garden. The furniture is of the simplest kind; it comprises a shut-up bedstead, a small clock, chair, table, a few books, or materials for drawing or carving. The whitewashed walls are adorned by an engraving or two or a drawing of some sacred subject.

‘After the hours of prayer, the monks occupy themselves with carving, carpentering, or work in the gardens attached to the cells; they are allowed to cut down small timber or underwood for firing, and they may also read, in addition to works of devotion, scientific books, histories, travels, &c. The cloisters and the cells, which are ranged beside them, occupy the whole of the second

block of buildings, the lesser parallelogram; they are divided into three parallel courts, the middle one being the cemetery, from the centre of which rises a large stone cross. We had had a glimpse of this quiet spot as we passed along the cloistered galleries, dimly lighted by small arched windows glazed and leaded, where the fathers take their exercise, and where our footsteps and our voices echoed as if no other living souls were near. At last a door on our left admitted us to the small burial-place, the modest dimensions of which with its simple tranquil character produce quite a different set of impressions from those aroused by a modern cemetery with its army of tombstones and fortresses of mausoleums; even the quiet country churchyard is left behind by this secluded spot, and the pleasant impression thus made was enhanced, perhaps, by the change from the dark and silent passages to the outer air, not only fresher, but very much warmer than that of the interior.

‘There was a new grave, the loose friable earth of which covered the remains of the last general of the order, who had died about a week before our visit.

‘A rude cross of laths is placed for a short time over those recently buried; but when that is gone, there is nothing to mark the resting-place of each monk but tradition or memory of those who may have won a special claim to be remembered by their companions. The names they bore in the world ceased to be theirs when they entered those walls, and the simple ones used in the cloister soon pass into oblivion.

‘The cemetery of the Chartreuse may not be a cheerful spot, but it hardly struck us as one calcu-

lated to produce the mournful impression that comes over one in similar places. Whether it is, as it were, the absence of any world to regret, or the quiet monotonous life led by the Carthusians, of which death may be regarded as only a continuation—whatever the cause, the contrast here between the abodes of the living and those of the dead seemed shorn of its terrors, and we felt rather disposed to linger and listen to the splashing of water in the fountains, and to gaze into the blue vault of heaven above this last home of the order.

‘Nevertheless our walk, though indoors, had been long; time was getting on; and perhaps as a preparation for our own meal we were taken to the monks’ refectory.

‘The morrow was a fête-day, but my memory does not serve me to say what preparations were made for the general repast. The cups on the marble table and the sparse utensils, though plainly laid out, were not devoid of order, colour, and arrangement, and their simple lines and curves forcibly brought to mind the pictures of the Old Masters representing the less elaborate repasts of this kind.

‘The circuit was over, and the *frère* led us to the guests’ refreshment-room, where preparations for regaling us were already commenced. Here he took his leave, and was replaced by a servitor of anything but lean proportions, dressed in a sort of blouse, and having in his hand a case *à la mode des restaurants*, containing hot dishes, a first-rate omelette, trout capitally cooked, preceded by vegetable-soup, and followed by salad, bread, butter, dried fruits, &c., not forgetting the excellent *ordinaire* and the *petits verres* of Chartreuse as a parting *bonne bouche*. Our party at din-

ner was increased by a visitor who had spent the previous night there, and he told us that although the convent was terribly cold, the good monks had given him plenty of blankets and a comfortable bed; so that he had nothing to complain of, except the absence of his coffee, which, as the fathers esteem it a luxury, is not allowed within the walls.

‘Before taking leave, we purchased a small bottle of the liqueur, which is sold in flasks from a franc upwards. Their revenues depend much on the sale of this cordial; the sums charged for board and lodging only just cover the expenses of the visitors. Still we suspect that the order is richer than is supposed, or how could it construct the pile of buildings now nearly complete at Cowfold in Sussex, destined, we are told, to receive seventy monks, and having beneath an immense range of cellarage? Is it a commercial undertaking on the part of the good brothers? Is the English house to be the great *dépôt* for their liqueur, or are the interests of religion and Rome alone the sources of the movement? Time will show.’

It has been said that the Grande Chartreuse is to be given up. One cannot believe that the monks will desert the cradle of their order, the first hermitage of the pious Bruno; and how tame, even though peaceful, will the Sussex downs appear after the majestic beauties of one of the grandest gorges in Europe! There is no company like the company of Nature in her mountain moods, lovely and delightful, whether in sunshine or in storm; so varying, yet so stable; so young and fresh, though old as time; surely the vow of silence could not have been endured, if there had not been Nature to converse with. We felt all this as, driving rapidly

downhill that lovely evening to St. Laurent, the mood of each seemed rather to gaze than to talk.

It had been a pleasant day, and the excellent dinner at the Hôtel de l'Europe did not diminish the impression left upon us.

We saw the Chartreuse in the bright and lovely spring-time, it is true, and our reminiscences may thus take the sunny hue of Nature's mood; but on looking back, the life of these silent recluses does not seem so dreary as we had before painted it to ourselves.

Their days are full of occupation, some intellectual, some practical. They visit the sick, preach in the neighbouring churches, superintend the repairs, the building, farming, and wood-cutting; and not unfrequently a white-robed father may be seen studying in the library at Grenoble, examining coins or the natural-history collections of the Musée. Most of the fathers are of gentle

birth; many have passed a youth of turbulence or labour in the world; they know well, therefore, what they have renounced and what they have to regret. There are no longings, no aspirations for scenes that only seem fair when far off and unknown.

The life they lead—the giving up their own wills absolutely; the parcelling out every hour of the night as well as day in one monotonous round of sleep, labour, and prayer, together with the severe regimen practised—has brought body and will into subjection, and given to some at least what they had perhaps vainly sought in the world when its excitements and emotions were exhausted—namely, *mental peace*. They have cast off the responsibilities of action, merged their individuality into a body; the end is gained, and that is all the Giaour of Byron's tale craved, when he exclaimed,

'Yet lurks a wish within my breast
For rest—but not to feel 'tis rest!'

A PEEP AT COPENHAGEN.

THERE are few pleasanter places for spending a summer holiday than Copenhagen, and those whose lot it is to reside there for a longer period find much that is at once interesting and amusing to occupy their leisure hours in Denmark. The number of tourists who annually pass through Copenhagen on their way to Norway and Sweden sufficiently attests the popularity of that capital as a halting-place. It is our purpose in the present paper to speak rather of the peculiarities which come under the eye of the resident than to repeat the familiar passages of *Murray* and *Baedekker*. Not many years ago we took passage in the Danish steamer *Thyra* from Hull to Copenhagen, in the month of July. Starting at 9 o'clock on a Sunday morning, it seemed at first sight an impossibility for the boat to make its way through the crowded shipping in the docks. With much shouting and hauling of ropes, and by steering which would have done credit to a hansom cab in the City, the captain worked a passage into the Humber. The afternoon saw us off the Spurn lighthouse and the Doggerbank, famous for its cod-fishing and frequent wrecks. Here already the few passengers began, and not without cause, to feel 'the evil of the sea,' and, headed by a fat commercial gentleman, made for their berths, not to appear again. The following day was fine and hot, but a heavy swell prevailed from morning until night. We lay on a bench on deck, and such were our suffer-

ings that, like a certain diplomatist on a similar occasion, we were almost 'throwing up our appointment.' The captain recommended a glass of schnaps, his panacea for all evils, and insisted that a second one must be taken, saying, 'Man kan ikke gaae paa et Been,'—'One cannot walk on one leg,' or as we should say, 'Wet the other eye.' With much delight we found ourselves early on the Tuesday morning off Elsinore, the 'wild and stormy steep' of which exists only in the mind of the poet. It is not our intention to describe the town of Copenhagen, but pass at once to more general considerations.

No person living for any length of time in a foreign country can hope to enjoy himself, and find that interest in his surroundings which compensates for the absence of home comforts and pursuits, without obtaining a fair mastery of the language of the land in which he lives. Danish is not a difficult language to acquire. A few months' study and practice in talking with the natives should suffice for all ordinary purposes. It may be described as a mixture of German and English. The traveller who speaks Danish will find himself quite at home in Norway, where the language is almost identical, and will have no great difficulty in picking up Swedish, which greatly resembles it. In Swedish a large proportion of words terminate in *a*, and the Swedes raise the voice at the end of each short sentence in a manner somewhat similar to (but decidedly

more musical than) the Scotch. The affinities between Danish and English are too well known to call for remark here, and may be studied by all in Trench, *Upon Words*. It may be noticed only, whilst on this subject, that in Lincolnshire and such English country districts as were occupied by the Danes, many purely Danish words still exist among the people which do not form part of the 'Queen's English;' whilst in Jutland the country people have many of what we should call 'English' words, which do not exist in the Danish language as spoken and written in the capital.

The climate of Denmark is rigorous, as the winter lasts more or less for nine months of the year. During both the winters which we spent there (1874 and 1875) the Sound was frozen over the whole way to the opposite coast of Sweden, and in some cases persons crossed on the ice from shore to shore. When once the warmth of summer is established, however, trees come quickly into leaf, and for three or four months the weather is delightful. In summer some good trout-fishing can be obtained in Jutland; and the yachtsman finds Copenhagen a very good place for head-quarters. Bathing is fairly good in the Sound, but not equal to the open sea, as the water is brackish and has little buoyancy. Fair amusement may be had in a canoe for those who can manage one with a sail. Pleasant trips may be made to Fredericia, Veile, and other places of interest, or to the islands. The geologist will find a rich field in the island of Moën, where the chalk cliffs abound in fossils. The scenery of this spot is also exceedingly pretty, and the hotel very pleasant and comfortable. Winter brings skating, which is conducted in an admir-

able manner, well worthy of imitation in England when circumstances permit. A club is formed, open to all respectable persons on payment of a small subscription. A large space of ice is roped in on the reservoir near the town, and kept carefully swept and attended to. A band plays in the afternoons, and exhibitions of fancy skating, races, &c., take place, as well as occasional illuminations and skating festivals at night. Certain young English gentlemen go every year to Copenhagen for the express purpose of skating; and if they do not find it in perfection there proceed to Stockholm, or even further north. Good wild-fowl shooting may be had with a little trouble. Other sport is scarce. Those who care for pike-fishing may, however, enjoy it to perfection, as permission is easily obtained, and both the natives and the fish appear ignorant of the use of the spoon-bait, which is very killing in Danish waters: we have taken nine or ten good fish in a day in the immediate neighbourhood of Copenhagen, and have at times landed pike of twelve and fifteen pounds weight. In the market they may almost daily be seen up to as much as thirty or forty pounds when in season.

A slight disadvantage attending a residence in Copenhagen, or the pretty watering-places which dot the coast of the Sound from thence as far as Elsinore, is experienced from the smell of the seaweed washed up by the brackish water and lying exposed to the sun. This evil odour is maintained by the Danes to be neither unpleasant nor unhealthy. The general opinion of foreigners may be expressed in the words attributed to King Nebuchadnezzar concerning his grass diet: 'It may be wholesome, but it is not good.'

After all, perhaps, the smell of rotten seaweed is the most agreeable that exists in the Danish capital during the summer-time; but this is an unsavoury subject, and need not be enlarged upon.

The English visitor, shortly after his arrival in the town, usually asks for a glass of Copenhagen cherry-brandy, which he generally is unable to obtain, as it is made entirely for export, and is unknown as a retail article of drink to the Danes themselves. Foiled in his first desire, the traveller frequently endeavours to console himself by procuring a 'real Danish dog.' Here again he will be doomed to disappointment, as the intelligent spotted animal known in this country as the 'carriage' or 'Danish' dog is not found in Denmark, and is of Dalmatian race. It may be interesting to note that the rabbit does not, and apparently cannot, exist in Denmark or further north, and that no four-legged donkeys are found in that country, excepting one in the Zoological Gardens at Copenhagen, which specimen is perhaps the most interesting object of the collection to the inhabitants.

It ill becomes the English, however, to criticise Denmark as to what it has *not*, since the brightest ornament of our country came from its palaces to ours; let us rather see what Copenhagen has, and it has much at once interesting and beautiful. Firstly, its museums and palaces, the Thorwaldsen statuary, the northern antiquities, and the fine ethnological collection; then the lovely castle of Fredriksborg, with its chapel containing a series of paintings by the modern artist Bloch, whose picture of Samson and Delilah and other works will, we venture to assert, obtain, in course of time, a more than local

reputation; the unique and invaluable collection in the old palace of Rosenborg, which has no parallel except perhaps the celebrated 'green vaults' at Dresden. Again, the 'Dyrhaven,' or royal deerpark, and the grounds at the royal summer residence of Fredensborg, to which free access is given to the public, will bear comparison with our finest English parks. The new theatre in Copenhagen, built after the model of the opera-house in Vienna, shows that a small country may succeed where large ones sometimes wholly fail. In this theatre the old Danish comedies of the Danish Shakespeare, Ohlenschlœger, are most creditably performed. The tourist who has money to spend and a taste for curios and china may still make a good bargain in the antiquarians' shops; but the Jew dealers from Paris and London have for some time past swooped down on all that was most worth acquiring of this kind. The resident collector, however, still finds means to fill his house with old china and brasses of curious manufacture, and picks up, here and there, quantities of those varied *objets de vertu* which fill the heart of the *bric-à-brac* hunter with delight. The less wealthy traveller may well content himself by purchasing some of the best and cheapest gloves in Europe, and such articles of the well-known Danish modern china and terracotta work as suit his purse and fancy.

As in most other countries, where railways and Cook's tourists work their way, peculiarities of costume are fast disappearing amongst the peasants, though in the island of Amarga, close to the gates of the capital, where the descendants of an old Dutch colony still reside and avoid in-

termixture with the Danes, picturesque festival dresses are yet retained to a certain extent.

The cost of living is by no means high, considering the advance in this particular that has been made by every city in Europe of late years.

The Danes mostly make a substantial breakfast about 10 A.M., and dine at 3 in the afternoon, the cravings of hunger being subsequently allayed with schnaps, beer, and slices of brown bread and butter covered with a piece of smoked salmon or some similar delicacy. Every true Dane delights to begin the day with a basin of 'ölbrodsuppe,' composed of black beer and cream with slices of brown bread floating therein. It is said to be very nutritious. The strangest compound of which it ever became our lot to partake was called 'Rumsuppe,' and was composed of milk, rum, and preserved cherries, made hot and whipped into a froth. At a dinner commencing with such a dish, it may be supposed that it was a difficult matter to choose what to drink, and the after-consequences may be imagined, but need not be described. Several Danish dishes look more peculiar on the *menu* than they do upon the table; for instance, 'Foloren Skildpadde' (mock turtle), 'Røget Gaasebryst' (smoked goose-breast), &c. The proverbial honesty of the Danes shows itself on the tariffs in the restaurants, where 'Lafitte' figures at three francs per bottle, 'Real Lafitte' fourteen francs, and so on.

A great institution at Copenhagen is the State lottery, drawn in two series of six months each, and very popular with all classes. The drawing of this lottery and payment of prizes are conducted with admirable method and fairness. Nothing better exhibits the calm and unexcit-

able nature of the Danes than the systematic way in which one will take his tickets for thirty years without drawing a prize, and never fret or even mention the matter; whilst another wins the grand prize, ruins himself, and commences afresh, in the same quiet and matter-of-fact manner.

The independent Englishman must be cautioned against indulging too freely in the habit of whistling, as it is not permitted in the streets of Copenhagen. The police signal to one another by a whistle, and do not approve of the general public whistling promiscuously after nightfall. We ourselves had a serious altercation on this point with a native official, and it is said that an *attaché* to the British Legation was once locked up for the night in consequence of his persisting in riotous whistling in opposition to the police.

The Danish soldiers are hardy and brave, as they have proved on many a hard-fought field. The martinet might perhaps take exception to a habit of the sentinels in front of the royal palaces in Copenhagen walking up and down their beats two and two, so as to beguile the time with conversation, occasionally putting down their rifles for a quarter of an hour or so for greater convenience. We will not venture to say that they smoke whilst on duty, not being quite certain upon this point. A fine sight is the daily mounting of guard in the palace-square, when the King and Queen are in town. The Royal Guard is composed of men selected for their height and size, and still retain the old uniform of their corps.

A curious costume is still worn by the King's 'running footmen,' who act as attendants at State

festivities. They are dressed in a short scarlet jacket with tight knee-breeches and silk stockings, and carry on their heads a tall square hat adorned with a profusion of artificial flowers; the entire head-dress having the appearance of a large gilt flower-pot filled with roses and other flowers. As these servitors are mostly old and very stout, their appearance is calculated to afford considerable amusement to the irreverent stranger.

Danish society is somewhat stiff and ceremonious. The native grandee, weighed down by the sense of his own importance and the insignia of the Order of the Elephant, balancing on one side the large gilt chamberlain's key which he wears on the other, calls in evening dress on the official foreigner early in the morning, and expects his visit to be returned with the like ceremonial.

The middle and lower classes also indulge in the greatest courtesy towards one another. No one enters a shop or leaves it without saluting the gentleman or lady behind the counter and exchanging inquiries as to health, family, and general prosperity. Salutations in the streets are so frequent and profound that the brim of one's hat is soon worn out unless made of extra strength and durability.

It was our good fortune whilst at Copenhagen to attend the grand naval review in the Sound, and also an annual review of the military forces, held near the town. On the latter occasion the *attaché* at the British Legation determined to attend on horseback, with which purpose he repaired, equipped in riding-costume, to the military stables, where he was in the habit of hiring a horse. There he found that all the men had gone to the

review, and only one evil-looking steed remained in the stalls. Assisted by a small boy, he promptly saddled the animal and rode out on to the boulevard, on his way to the scene of action. The horse, which was only half broken, and had been kept at home on that account, evinced no disposition to obey his strange rider, and after a series of extraordinary evolutions in public, the latter was obliged to dismount and lead his steed back to its stable, proceeding himself on foot to the review, where his costume provoked some comment amongst his friends and acquaintances.

In conclusion of these very discursive notes, we will notice a pleasant excursion easily made from Copenhagen in ten days' time. The tourist takes steamer to Christiania, and after spending two or three days there, proceeds to cross the Continent, by rail, to Stockholm, thence descending the Gotha Canal to Gothenberg, and so by steamer back to Copenhagen. As this journey does not belong to the subject of the present paper, we will only notice the excellent arrangements of the Swedish and Norwegian railway trains. The latter in summer carry, in place of the usual oil-lamp, a filter of pure water containing a large lump of ice, and fitted with a tap and with a cup, suspended by a chain. In Sweden the carriages are warmed in winter-time by a system of pipes conveying steam from the engine throughout the train, each compartment being fitted with an apparatus for regulating the heat. A young Englishman of our acquaintance, travelling in Sweden, took with him a York ham, and one of those ingenious contrivances by which 'a mutton-chop may be cooked in five minutes with a single sheet of newspaper.'

Having passed the night in the train, and feeling hungry at early dawn, he cut some slices off his ham, and set his cooking machine to work on the floor of the carriage. The other travellers soon awoke in consequence of the smell of burnt paper and the frizzling of the ham, and must have been not a little surprised at the sight of their fellow-passenger on his hands and knees, diligently feeding the flames with scraps of the *Times*. Rashers were, however, distributed to all, and contentment reigned supreme. This same gentleman, dining one day in a Swedish hotel in some small town, observed on the bill-of-fare the word 'Sparris.' He at once came to the conclusion that this meant asparagus, a favourite dish with him; he there-

fore ordered two platefuls to follow his joint. Now 'Sparris' happened to be the 'spare-rib' of pork; but the waiter, not to be astonished at the appetite of an Englishman, nor at any order coming from a British traveller, brought two good helpings of the dish in due course; whereupon followed a scene of explanations and recriminations vastly amusing, no doubt, to the other guests.

Here we will close our notebook, with the hope that no member of the Danish nation, under whose eye these lines may fall, will take offence at anything we have written, or imagine that we think slightly of that country, in which we spent many pleasant and instructive days, and of which the remembrance is both pleasing and dear to us.

LONDON SOCIETY.

OCTOBER 1879.

MISS MONKTON'S MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER I.

LETITIA.

'SHALL I tell you what I mean to do, cousin Florinda?' said Miss Monkton, as she sat over the fire one evening in Christmas week.

'If you please, my dear.'

'I mean to marry an officer. Then I shall move about with the army in spite of papa. I have some thoughts of Crosby, his own aide-de-camp. What would he say to that, now? I can tell you I have a prodigious fancy for Crosby.'

'*Captain Crosby*,' said Mrs. Bushe, in the tone of mild remonstrance which was all she ever ventured on with her charge Letitia.

She had been wandering softly round the room in the firelight, putting the books straight on the table, restoring the contents of Letitia's workbox, which lay tumbled in a confused heap on the sofa. Now she moved forward and stood on the hearthrug, a pale slender woman in a black satin gown, with light hair put plainly back, and worn delicate features, with enough beauty lingering about them to show that twenty years ago she might have been as lovely as Letitia was now.

Crosby, or any other aide-de-camp, ought to have felt himself honoured by Miss Monkton's fancy. She was 'fair as the day,' as her nurse said, with an old-fashioned bloom of roses in her cheeks, laughing eyes, brown hair with gold threads in it, which she wore gathered up into a mass of short curls, and a grace of movement and attitude which was not affected even by the oddly hideous short-waisted gowns of the time. Mrs. Bushe and she had lived together in this old house, thirty miles from London, for the last ten years, while Sir George Monkton, her father, a distinguished general officer, had been with the army. They had only seen him twice during that time; but he wrote constantly to them both, and ordered every little thing about their household as if he had been living a mile off. Now, at the end of December 1815, they were expecting him to pay them a visit. He had come over from France two or three weeks ago; but with Sir George business always took precedence of pleasure, and other people's business of his own, so that there were all sorts of military affairs to be settled in London before he could

take a few weeks' rest and see his daughter.

'Pray don't scorch your face, Letitia,' said Mrs. Bushe, moving her slow pensive eyes from the fire to those rosy cheeks in the full glow of it. 'I wish your papa to find you looking well.'

'Never mind,' said Letitia, smiling. 'He won't bring Crosby with him.'

'You astonish me.'

'Well now, cousin Florinda, it is all his own doing. He began three years ago, "A fine young fellow, Crosby by name, has joined the regiment lately. He is Irish, and I know nothing of his antecedents; but he will make a smart officer." And you know it has gone on ever since. Crosby here, Crosby there, distinguishing himself over and over again. I know papa was only too glad to have him for his aide-de-camp when poor Captain Smith was killed last June. Since then he has been his right-hand man completely; has even addressed his letters sometimes—and very well he writes, too.'

'All that may be very true,' said Mrs. Bushe, looking down with the faintest smile of amusement, which Letitia did not see. 'But you don't seem to be aware that you are talking of this gentleman in a very extraordinary way. Let me assure you that he himself would not be flattered by it, and your papa would be horrified.'

'O, but he would be flattered. Haven't I heard you say that men are the vainest creatures on earth? Especially officers. You detest officers, don't you?'

'I think they are not always to be trusted,' said cousin Florinda gravely and coldly. 'Before I was married—at your age—I thought very much as you do.'

'Then you can't blame me,'

said Letitia, who was leaning her chin on her hands and staring into the fire.

'Dear child,' replied cousin Florinda after a moment's pause, 'I trust these ideas of yours may never lead you into unhappiness like mine.'

'O, no,' said Letitia, and then she checked herself.

Major Bushe had been the most worthless of men; had treated his wife unkindly, spent all her money, and left her, without a farthing, on the charity of her relations. Still his widow, having loved him in her young days, would not hear anything said against him now; and Letitia, being given to thoughtless chattering, often found silence the best refuge from an almost forbidden subject. She believed in her heart that poor, pretty, gentle, old cousin Florinda would have talked a great deal about her past troubles if she had been encouraged. But Letitia hated feelings, and any talk that was likely to bring them uppermost; it therefore suited her best to suppose that cousin Florinda preferred living in the present.

They were presently disturbed by a great tramping and rattling outside, and the pealing of a loud bell. Sir George's carriage had driven into the yard. They knew him well enough not to rush out to meet him. Letitia pirouetted round the room; but was standing quite still near the door in her white dress, composed, but with scarlet cheeks and slightly disordered curls, when Sir George walked firmly and quickly up the stone passage, and came into the room.

He was a slight active-looking man of middle height, with gray hair cut close, and a dark reddish complexion. He had taken off his greatcoat, and walked in like

anybody else, as if he had been in the house for a week.

'How d'ye do, Florinda?' he said, shaking hands with Mrs. Bushe. 'You are very well, I hope. Letty, how d'ye do?'

'How d'ye do, papa?' said Letitia, coming forward with small sliding steps. Her father kissed her, then held her hands and looked at her for a moment.

'You have been roasting your face. A bad thing, especially in cold weather.'

'You have had a very cold drive, papa?'

'Nothing worth complaining of,' said Sir George.

He sat down, declining the arm-chair that Letitia pushed forward, and taking a high one by the table. Since he had come in, the night somehow seemed much colder; yet they both knew that it was only manner, and that Sir George was really the best man in the world. He talked politics, and told them what he had been doing in London.

'Dinner is waiting, I think,' said Mrs. Bushe presently. 'I thought you would like to have it as soon as you came in.'

'Thank you. Quite unnecessary. I dined in town three hours ago. But pray don't let me keep you from your dinner,' said Sir George, getting up and walking towards the door.

'O no, Sir George. I daresay it is not ready; and in fact Letitia and I have dined. We want nothing more,' said Mrs. Bushe, rising too in a flutter, 'thank you. If you will excuse me, I'll speak to the servants.'

She glided out, full of natural feeling for the cook, who had been doing her very best to welcome the hungry traveller. Last time he had arrived unexpectedly, and dinner had had to be cooked in a hurry at eight o'clock at

night. Sir George was one of those men, now and then to be met with, who make no fuss about themselves, and yet give the greatest trouble to everybody.

'Florinda seems rather nervous this evening,' said Sir George, looking approvingly at his daughter, who was quietly embroidering a workbag, and did not seem at all disturbed by household cares. 'She looks thin. How do you agree?'

'Very well indeed, papa. We never quarrel.'

'You obey, do you? Submit to rules? I believe many young women of your age think themselves independent.'

'So I am—tolerably independent. I do whatever I please.'

'Whatever you please! You are more fortunate than most people, then,' said Sir George, smiling for the first time. 'And you wish for no change? You told me in a letter last year that this place in winter was a living sepulchre.'

'Did I? I forget; but I must have been in a bad temper that day,' said Letitia. 'The place is not gay, of course; but no, I wish for no change, papa, thank you. Unless—'

'Well!'

'Unless I could go about with you.'

'That has been impossible. Now that we have peace, I may take you to Paris next summer.'

'O, delightful!' said Letitia, clapping her hands.

'But there is an "unless" in the case there too.'

'What can that be, papa?'

'I shall not explain myself at present. Do you see much of your neighbours at the Castle?'

'We see them occasionally,' said Letitia. 'But cousin Florinda does not care much for their society—neither do I.'

'That is prejudice,' said Sir

George decisively. 'They are excellent people, an old and wealthy family, nothing to be said against them.'

'I have nothing to say, except that they are countrified and dull. I assure you, papa, Mrs. Barrett and her daughters think of nothing but making jam and knitting stockings. Mr. Barrett sleeps in his chair all day long, and young Mr. Barrett shoots rabbits.'

'Prejudice,' said Sir George again. 'They are most worthy people.'

'Don't you think that worthy and stupid are often only two words for the same thing, papa?' said Miss Monkton, with a mischievous glance of her bright eyes.

Sir George moved from one stiff attitude to another, and frowned.

'Where did you get these ideas? Florinda Bushe is not a fit person to have charge of you.'

'O, don't blame her, papa, pray. She is always being shocked, and scolding me. I am very sorry; but I see most of the Barretts over the top of the pew in church, and that makes one feel ill-tempered, you know. They wear such ugly bonnets; but I dare say they may be good. And young Mr. Barrett stares, rather.'

The General's face softened.

'I have not much acquaintance with the ladies of the family,' he said, 'but Humphrey Barrett is an excellent fellow. I saw him in town last week; he came very civilly to call upon me. You are quite mistaken, if you think his soul is in his rabbits. And, by the bye, he hopes to have the honour of dancing with you next Wednesday night.'

'At their ball,' said Letitia.

'Exactly. Are you fond of dancing?'

'O papa, amazingly!'

'You told Humphrey Barrett

so one day, when he walked down the road from church with you and Florinda.'

'I believe I did.'

'Then this will at least show you that he is a good-natured fellow. This ball is given in consequence of that remark of yours. So let me hear no more ungracious speeches about the Barrett family.'

Letitia smiled, but without feeling particularly pleased. No arguments, she was sure, could make her think young Barrett anything but an awkward lout. And she did not believe this about the ball, for she felt sure that Mrs. Barrett had mentioned it to cousin Florinda before that Sunday.

The dinner mistake was not the only one made by Mrs. Bushe and her servants that night. The best and largest bedroom in the house had been prepared for Sir George. He had made up his mind that it would be much more convenient to everybody if he slept in a little room near the hall-door, which was at present filled up with old books, boxes, and lumber. It was therefore cleared out and made ready for him. Then when it was finished, and Sir George walked in to look at it, he immediately ordered out the fire and the carpet. His habits were simple, he said. He did not wish to accustom himself to luxuries, or to give any unnecessary trouble.

All being at last arranged, Letitia and her cousin wished Sir George good-night and went upstairs together. Before going on into her own room, which was inside Florinda's, the girl stopped to kiss her and say good-night. Mrs. Bushe was a good deal taller than Letitia. She held her in her arms, and looked down into the bright face with tired loving eyes.

'Cousin Florinda, you look worn out,' said Letitia. 'Now listen to me. Don't get up to-morrow morning. I will give papa his breakfast.'

'I could not desert my post, my dear, thank you.'

'O, well, you need not blame me for being obstinate. What plagues men are! Don't you think papa must drive his aide-de-camp quite mad? And who do you suppose he has made into a hero now?'

'I can't guess, indeed,' said Mrs. Bushe.

'That stupid heavy fellow, Humphrey Barrett. He saw him in town last week. And what do you think? He told him that this ball of theirs is given in compliment to me. Because I told Humphrey I was fond of dancing. That must be a story, you know. Mrs. Barrett told you of it before.'

'She did,' said Florinda, colouring. 'But to do them justice, her chief idea seemed to be that it would please you.'

'O!' said Letitia.

Perhaps Florinda Bushe was scarcely a fit person to have the care of her, for she never could help telling her the truth. Under Letitia's smiling penetrating gaze, no plot, no secret, was safe with her cousin. She looked away, she tried to move aside, but Letitia took hold of her arms and held her fast.

'There is some plot, I see,' she said. 'And you seem to be in it. You, the Barretts, and papa. What does it all mean?'

'A plot, my dear!' said Florinda. 'I can't understand you. You are talking nonsense.'

Letitia's laughing face grew graver and more determined.

'A plain question, then—and I'll have a plain answer. Have you all taken it into your heads that I am to marry young Barrett? Tell me the truth, pray!'

'Letitia, have I ever deceived you?'

'Cousin Florinda, if you ever tried, you never succeeded. Come, you must not be angry. You love me, I know; you don't wish to make me miserable, and the less you say, the more I shall suspect. Unless you tell me the whole truth at once, I won't go to the ball. I'll fall down-stairs and break my leg.'

'A sprained ankle would answer the purpose, and be well sooner,' said Florinda, smiling faintly. 'Well, I'll trust to your honour to behave like a gentlewoman. Mrs. Barrett has taken it into her head, certainly; she has hinted as much to me several times. And I suppose her son has too. It seems from what you say that he has made some advances to Sir George, which have not been unfavourably received.'

'And they all forget that there is one other person to be consulted,' cried Letitia, stamping her foot. 'What have I done to be given away to a lout like that! I hate and detest him! How can papa—how can *you* think such a thing possible!'

'He is heir, you see, to a fine property. There is some talk of his standing for the county. His politics and your papa's are the same; and no one has a word to say against his character.'

'Ugly wretch!' said Letitia. 'I hate these old country families. Their brains are as thick as the mud in their fields. When I want to bury myself alive, I'll do it under pleasanter circumstances. *You* never thought I would marry him, surely?'

Her eyes sparkled indignantly as she looked at her cousin. Florinda kissed her flushed forehead, and answered quietly,

'I hardly thought you would be pleased with the idea. Now

go to bed, my dear child, and to sleep. Of course your own wishes will be consulted.'

'I should think so!' said Letitia, beginning to laugh.

Two hours later, Mrs. Bushe stole into her charge's room. Letitia was sleeping like a child, though there was a damp look about the long eyelashes that lay on her rosy cheeks. She moved and smiled as her cousin bent over her. Was she dreaming of the ball?

CHAPTER II.

A HERO IN THE SNOW.

WHEN they came down next morning, it was snowing thickly. Sir George sat in the coldest corner of the library, writing letters, and grumbling about something that Crosby had forgotten. Presently he called Letitia to copy some papers for him, and she set to work at once, writing a neat little hand which satisfied her father. They sat at each end of a table in front of the window, which looked out on a square grass-plot bounded by an ivy-wall. Masses of snow already hung on the ivy, and the north wind had blown a great drift into a corner. It was snowing still, and one or two bold but shivering robins came hopping on the window-sill.

'Poor little things! I'll fetch you some crumbs,' said Letitia, who had quite recovered her usual good temper. The idea of Humphrey Barrett was too absurdly impossible to bear the light of day.

'Keep to your writing for the present,' said Sir George. 'I want those copies as soon as possible.'

Presently, having finished another letter, he laid his pen down and leaned back for a minute.

'Imagine a military secretary, or an aide-de-camp, leaving his work to feed robin redbreasts!' he said, with a good-humoured smile.

'I don't believe that women do their work less well than men, because they are a little soft-hearted and can't endure to see birds starving in the cold,' said Letitia.

'There is a time for everything,' answered Sir George.

'It must seem rather strange to you, papa, to have me working with you instead of Captain Crosby,' said Letitia, after a few minutes of diligent scratching.

'I feel like a man who has lost his right arm,' said Sir George thoughtfully. 'Very grateful for your help, Letty, all the same.'

'You like him very much, then, papa?'

'He has been extremely useful to me. He has a head, which is more than can be said for most young fellows. He will get on. The Duke has noticed him several times. Yes, I value Crosby in spite of his faults.'

'What are his faults?'

'Being an Irish adventurer, with all the absurdities of his nation, and nothing in the world but his pay.'

'O!' said Letitia, with a slight tone of satisfaction, which Sir George did not notice. If it had struck him, and roused any train of thought, this story would most likely never have been written.

'He is the most hasty-tempered fellow I ever met with,' he went on. 'A few weeks ago, he turned off a man for robbing him, without any evidence of the fact. All he told me was, that the rascal had a villanous face, and he could believe anything of him. Now that is not justice, and I told Crosby so.'

'I should have agreed with him,

most likely,' said Letitia. 'People's faces generally tell the truth.'

'That is a very juvenile doctrine,' said Sir George, smiling.

After another short silence Letitia looked up again.

'Where is Captain Crosby now, papa? In London?'

'Yes; I left him at the hotel.'

'Was he going home for New Year's-day?'

'Home, home!' repeated Sir George, with a letter in his hand. 'Crosby? Why, no. He has no home, I suppose. He is an Irishman.'

'But he has a home in Ireland?'

'I never heard of it. He appears to have no relations or connections of any kind. An adventurer—he has to carve his fortunes for himself.'

'Poor man!' said Letitia. 'And yet he is a gentleman?'

'To be sure,' said Sir George.

For the last few minutes his manner had been very absent, and now he began to frown, to mutter, and to twist the letter he held backwards and forwards.

'This must be explained. I have certainly mislaid his last letter. Confound it! what is the use of trying to do business without Crosby! The communication was made to him, too. This is most vexatious!'

'What is it, papa?'

'Business connected with the regiment.'

Sir George gave no further explanation, but got up, pushing his chair back so hurriedly that the robins flew away in a fright. He walked once or twice up and down the room, and then stopped by the table.

'Mind, Letitia, I will have no unnecessary fuss. But tell me honestly, would it be a great disturbance to Florinda to have a bed made up in some small room

for Crosby? He is a soldier, like myself; he wants no luxuries. But I cannot settle this affair without him.'

Letitia answered gravely that she had no doubt cousin Florinda would be happy to receive Captain Crosby, or any friend of her papa's.

'Very well,' said Sir George. 'No extra trouble must be given in the house. I will write to Crosby at once, and send the letter by an express messenger. He will be here to-morrow.'

He sat down again at the table.

'Papa,' said Letitia, when the letter was half written, 'excuse me, shall you take him to the ball? If so, you had better tell him to bring his uniform.'

'I suppose they will be glad to see him?' said Sir George doubtfully.

'O, fancy the delight of the Miss Barretts! A new partner, and an officer too!'

'Very true, poor girls. And Crosby is an agreeable fellow,' said Sir George, so unsuspectingly that Letitia was ashamed of herself.

A man and horse were sent off to London through the snow.

Miss Monkton, in high spirits, tried on her dress and ornaments, and figured before the glass in her own room, till Mrs. Bushe, who was looking on, gave a little sigh.

'What is the matter?' said Letitia, looking round.

'Nothing, my dear. Only I should like to feel that your thoughts sometimes travelled beyond your own amusement.'

'And don't they?' said Letitia. 'I expect to amuse many people besides myself, and among them—hush! This ball of Humphrey Barrett's will not be so bad after all.'

Mrs. Bushe, in spite of her gentle

good-nature, could not bring herself to rejoice in Captain Crosby's coming. Considering Letitia's excitability, and the fancy she had already taken to the young officer, she thought it a serious risk. She debated with herself whether she ought to have warned Sir George of this before the messenger started: but Sir George had said so firmly that it was a matter of necessity, and whatever nonsense Letitia might talk, there could be no doubt of the real dignity and honourableness of her nature. Still she was a very head-strong girl, as no one knew better than Florinda.

Miss Monkton was a little vexed by her cousin's want of sympathy. She took off all her finery and wrapped herself up in a scarlet cloak and hood, looking like winter in its prettiest form. Then she went out and walked about the garden, disdaining to stay in the paths that had been swept for her, and wandering away into the shrubberies. There she walked under the trees, which now and then played at snow-balling, dropping soft white lumps from their heavy-laden twigs upon her cloak.

It was a pleasant afternoon, not very cold. All the clouds had cleared away, and the yellow sun, hanging low in the south-west, shone softly in a pale-blue sky. The shrubbery, along which Letitia was walking, bordered the road for some distance: this was to her left. To her right, beyond the belt of trees and bushes, a little river moved slowly, black by contrast with its glistening white banks, and the great field that stretched away in front of the house and garden. At the farthest end of the shrubbery, which she presently reached, a light wooden bridge crossed the river, leading into the field, and

some rather crazy wooden palings and a shallow backwater, partly frozen over, divided her from the road. Letitia stood still a moment looking about her, and was rather startled in that quiet place by hearing voices on the road a little way off.

In those terrible times of distress the roads to London were full of tramps and beggars of every kind, and Letitia was never allowed to walk out by herself beyond the grounds. Even here in the shrubbery any determined beggar might reach her very easily, and she was a long way from the house. But that certainly was not the voice of a beggar. Letitia stepped from the path, and made her way through the snowy bushes till she could see down the road. A postchaise was stopping there, with a pair of tired-looking horses. The driver was busy examining the feet of one of them, and the passenger was standing by him on the snowy road, a good deal interested in what was going on.

'Have you never been on this road before, then?' Letitia heard him say, in a clear, pleasant, impatient voice.

The driver grumbled something in answer.

'What a fool you were, then, not to ask your way in that last village we passed through! We may have miles further to go, and the horse is dead lame. Your looking at his feet will do no good. I see a house through the trees up there. I shall go on and ask the way.'

He acted so instantly on this determination, that before Letitia had quite retired into the shrubbery he had caught a glimpse of her red cloak. He came close to the water's edge and stopped. Some instinct made her stop too.

'Will you do me a great favour?' he said, in so courteous and agree-

able a voice that Letitia came quite frankly forward to the palings, and made him a polite bow. Seeing this little picture of a lady smiling in her scarlet hood among the snow, he took off his hat with almost the air of a Frenchman, and looked at her for an instant in silence.

Letitia afterwards remembered an unpleasant thought that came over her just then.

'O dear! I hoped Crosby might be something like this, and there certainly can't be two of them.'

The hero of the postchaise was a tall young man, with decided and handsome features, a charming smile, and black hair curling closely. There was something slightly foreign about him, a lively eagerness of manner, which showed itself in the first moment of acquaintance. In his talk, too, there was a little accent of some kind; Letitia hardly knew what. Her imagination had no time to work; the stranger revealed himself so soon.

'I shall be happy to do anything I can,' said Letitia sweetly.

'A thousand thanks. Can you tell me how far I am from Sir George Monkton's?'

'O, what fun! Is it possible!' thought Letitia, opening her eyes. She smiled as she answered,

'You are there already. The house is at the end of this shrubbery; you see it through the trees.'

'I had no idea I was so fortunate. Is it possible, then, that I have the honour of speaking to Miss Monkton?'

Letitia graciously smiled her assent.

'Allow me to introduce myself. You may have heard my name—Crosby.'

'O yes. Papa often talks of you.'

'Does he, indeed! May I send

the chaise on to the house? I will be with you directly.'

Letitia stood still in her snowy corner, in quite a whirl of delighted amusement. This was better than ten balls. Captain Crosby rushed down the road, and returned the next moment with a roll of papers in his hand.

'How will you get across the water?' said Letitia, seeing that he quite meant to join her in the shrubbery.

'Water! O, here are stepping-stones.'

Letitia was not aware of their existence; but somehow, with one or two splashes, and a hand on the fence, Captain Crosby was by her side.

'You have chosen a snowy walk,' he said.

'The snow comes so seldom that I quite enjoy it,' said Letitia.

They turned into the path, and walked slowly back towards the house. Captain Crosby's business with his chief did not seem to be anything very urgent, but presently he remembered that his appearance might as well be accounted for.

'I must explain my sudden arrival,' he said. 'Sir George does not expect me, I know.'

'You did not meet his messenger?' said Letitia, looking up.

'His messenger!'

'He found this morning that he could not do without you, and sent off a man to ask you to come down at once and bring some papers that he wanted. So we expected you to-morrow, though not to-day.'

'You have told me the only thing I wanted to make me perfectly happy. Those very papers are in this packet. I have information for Sir George, too, which I should not have cared to send by letter.'

There was a moment's silence. Letitia was aware by this time

that Captain Crosby had beautiful dark-blue eyes, and certainly a most graceful and charming manner. She was also aware that he expressed, without words, a deep admiration for herself. All this was very delightful, and the least bit confusing. She walked along, looking down at the snow. Captain Crosby looked at her.

'I hardly know how I shall get back to town to-night,' he said. 'One of my horses has fallen lame, most fortunately—I beg your pardon a thousand times. You may be of a different opinion.'

Letitia was too truthful to be a flirt, and had had no experience.

'To-night! I should think not!' she said. 'We are going to-morrow to Mrs. Barrett's ball, and papa said you would go with us.'

'I am immensely pleased to hear it,' said Captain Crosby.

His want of home and connections did not seem to have any effect on his spirits; there was a free frank light-heartedness about him which made it quite impossible to treat him with any stiffness. A dangerous adventurer, certainly, as Mrs. Bushe had feared, and she, with her larger experience of men, might not have felt Letitia's ready trust in him.

Mrs. Barrett's ball was an amusing subject to talk about. By the time they reached the house the General's daughter and his aide-de-camp were on a footing of intimate acquaintance that Humphrey Barrett might in vain have hoped to reach with Miss Monkton.

Sir George was very glad to see Crosby, told him so, and sent off another messenger after the first for his baggage. Crosby himself was all that every one could wish: devoted to business with his chief; full of polite attention to Mrs. Bushe, who had to confess that he

was very agreeable. And as to Letitia, when she saw what was so plain, that evening and the next day, that he belonged to her all the time, and watched for every opportunity of being near her and talking to her, she felt happy and a little frightened, and did not quite know what to make of this almost magical fulfilment of her wish.

CHAPTER III.

MRS. BARRETT'S BALL.

SIR GEORGE MONKTON'S carriage and horses had a hard task in ploughing through the snow in the hilly lanes that led up to the Castle. The drive was twice as long as usual, but the people in the carriage bore it patiently enough. Even Letitia did not complain.

Captain Crosby, though perhaps he hardly told himself so, would have been quite happy to sit opposite her for any number of hours, as long as the lamplight just shone on her face in such a perfectly becoming manner. He had admired her very much from the first, but to-night she was lovelier than ever. Crosby considered himself a great critic, and when she had come down into the drawing-room before they started, he had been at once struck by the good taste which had dressed her simply in white, with quiet little ornaments that any girl might have worn. Crosby was one of those Irishmen who know the right thing instinctively when they see it, without any theories to found their knowledge on. But people were not so much bothered with theories in those days; they liked and disliked by instinct or tradition. In some way Crosby was satisfied,

and made up his mind, perhaps presumptuously, when one considers all the facts of the case. He was turning over different plans in his head as they sat in the carriage, and was therefore a little more silent than he had been before.

Letitia herself seemed to be in a wonderful state of happy excitement. She chattered away almost faster and more freely than Sir George approved; but even he could not find it in his heart to check her. So they all arrived very cheerfully at the Castle.

This was a large square house, built on the top of a hill. The present Squire Barrett's great-grandfather had lived in the remains of an old castle on the same site; but his son, a man of more enlightened mind, not being able to put up with the ghosts, rats, and other inconveniences that he found there, pulled it down and did away with it altogether, and built a most satisfactory family mansion in its place. One might have hunted England over before one found anything much squarer, uglier, or more prosaic; but the Barretts were a good sensible old family, and their motto had always been 'use before ornament.' So the present generation never complained of their house, or did anything but honour their grandfather for having built it.

The carriage drew up at a broad flight of steps, covered with an awning. Sir George and his aide-de-camp got out at once. At Mrs. Barrett's request they were both in uniform, and very well they looked. Sir George gave his arm to Mrs. Bushe, and took her into the house. Captain Crosby had the happiness of following with Letitia.

'Do you mean to enjoy the evening?' he said to her.

'O yes, indeed. I do love a ball.'

'You will give me the honour of the first dance?'

'Certainly, with pleasure.'

'I'd have gone a thousand miles, of course, with this at the end of it; but on the whole I believe I have no passion for balls. It is a moral defect, I know; you need not tell me so. I am very much ashamed.'

'Ah,' said Letitia, 'but you have been to so many, no doubt. This is only the fourth in my life.'

'I wish it was only the fourth in mine, or the first, for that matter,' said Captain Crosby. 'There was one other, though, that interested me, in a different way. The Duchess of Richmond's ball at Brussels, the night before Quatre Bras.'

'Ah, you were there!'

The deep enthusiastic interest in Letitia's eyes, as she lifted them to his face, would have been too much for any soldier.

'Yes. It has been described to you often, no doubt, by Sir George and everybody else.'

'People have told me about it, but I should like to hear again. How splendid and how awful it must have been, the distant cannon breaking in upon the music!' said Letitia, in a low voice.

'Yes; even to those who expected it, as many of us did. I remember poor Smith—my predecessor, you know. He told me, before we went to the ball, of his engagement to a girl we all admired prodigiously. There he was, of course, dancing with her, she looking more beautiful, more happy than any one in the room, and he such a fine manly fellow. I caught sight of her at midnight, when they had just parted; it was indeed a change; she never saw him again, you know. Forgive me; I have no right to sadden you like this. For Heaven's sake, smile! Such things must happen

in time of war, and if a man dies a death that his friends need not be ashamed of, why, then— How could I be such a fool !’

Letitia had hung down her head, her cheeks had lost all their pretty colour, and her eyes had filled with tears. They were slowly crossing the wide hall, on their way to the drawing-room, where their party had just been announced. Captain Crosby bent towards his companion with a smile of tender interest and admiration, and slightly pressed the hand that lay on his arm. At the moment Letitia could not speak, but she recovered herself almost directly.

Near the drawing-room door several servants were standing. Captain Crosby stared so hard at one of them that the man bowed to him. He frowned, and returned the salute slightly. Then he and Letitia, following Sir George and Mrs. Bushe, found themselves being received by Mrs. Barrett in the drawing-room.

She was a short, plain, sensible-looking woman, and seemed the brightest of the family, though her manner was provokingly downright, and devoid of any kind of ‘nonsense.’ Her two daughters were large fair girls, who looked meek and suppressed, as if all the nonsense had been crushed out of them from childhood. Her husband was tall, square, and heavy, and had not much to say. Her only son, the Humphrey of Letitia’s aversion, was a tall fellow too, very like his father, but with more life and quickness in his eyes, and a truly English haughtiness of manner, with something of the bully in it towards people he chose to consider beneath him. He wore his scarlet hunting-coat, and looked well enough, but could not get rid of a countrified air, which was very evident in con-

trast with Captain Crosby’s elegance.

Nearly everybody in the county was assembled in the Castle drawing-room that evening. Music was just beginning to strike up in the adjoining ballroom. Great fires were blazing; Christmas wreaths hung about in all directions. The peace with France had raised everybody’s spirits, and it seemed quite right to welcome in the new year with music and dancing.

Humphrey Barrett walked up to Miss Monkton, as she sat by Mrs. Bushe, Sir George having taken Crosby away to introduce him to some of the gentlemen, and asked her for the first dance with a confident air; he evidently thought it nothing but his right.

‘Thank you,’ said Letitia; ‘but I have promised it to Captain Crosby.’

‘That’s too bad,’ said Humphrey, trying to hide his disgust under a joke. ‘You should not have let a stranger forestall your neighbours.’

Letitia raised her eyebrows and smiled slightly, but gave no answer to this ill-mannered speech. Humphrey saw that he had made a bad beginning. He asked her for the next dance, which she was obliged to promise him, and then stood by her, talking rather tiresomely about the weather, till Captain Crosby came to carry his partner away.

The ball went on like other balls. Letitia danced several times with Crosby, and several times with Humphrey Barrett, and once or twice with other gentlemen. She was the beauty of the evening, and many people would have been only too glad to dance with her, if they had seen any chance for themselves. Perhaps some of the humbler ones were dissuaded by the scowls of young Barrett,

who stood by the wall during two or three of her dances with Crosby, and glowered after them in a way that even shocked his mother, who came up and begged him to dance with Miss So-and-so.

Crosby behaved much more philosophically; perhaps one can understand that. If his chief admiration was for Miss Monkton, his politeness, his pleasant talk and perfect dancing were quite at the service of any young lady to whom he was introduced. He made the Miss Barretts smile and blush, brightened the shy and stiff, laughed with the lively. If it was true that he did not care for balls, no one there, at least, seemed to find more enjoyment in this one.

Sir George sat down to play whist with some of the elder people. Mrs. Bushe sat with some of the other ladies, and watched the dancing. They did not find her very sociable, for her eyes and thoughts were following Letitia, who came back to her now and then looking more happy and brilliant than ever.

Once Letitia was sitting down by her cousin, and Captain Crosby was standing by, waiting for one of their dances. They were rather silent at the moment, for the continual chatter of the rest of the room did not seem to be necessary here. Letitia was leaning back fanning herself, and Crosby was looking at her, and talking in a rather broken way to Mrs. Bushe, who answered him absently. Humphrey Barrett, who had been watching them from a distance, came up and stood by them. The slightest smile curled Crosby's lips as he turned to speak to him.

'I saw a man among your servants in the hall,' he said, 'who was with me not long ago.'

'With you!' said Humphrey.

'Yes. Roger Vance.'

'His last place was with Major Clark. I had his character from him. He is my own man.'

'Do you like him?'

'Capital fellow—can do anything.'

'So he can,' said Crosby. 'He was with me six months, though, after he left Major Clark; but I suppose he thought it not worth while to apply to me.'

'Major Clark gave me a very satisfactory account of him,' said Humphrey, with some stiffness.

Crosby took no further notice of him, but turned to Miss Monkton, and led her away to the dance. As they walked along the room, he said to her:

'Mr. Barrett seems completely satisfied with that man of his, but I could tell him that he is a rascal. I turned him off for theft. And in my opinion his character is written on his face.'

'Why did not you say so?'

'One has to consider before one takes a fellow's character away. It would deprive him, you see, of all chance in life. You can see the justice of that, I am quite sure. He will perhaps keep honest now, for his own sake.'

It appeared to Letitia that her hero was as perfect in justice and mercy as in more showy virtues.

Meanwhile, Humphrey sat down by Mrs. Bushe, and began to entertain her.

'Which do you like best now, soldiers or civilians? Of course soldiers are the most attractive. I may wear a red coat, but never so smart a one as his.'

'The coat has not much to do with it, I should think,' said Mrs. Bushe, smiling.

'O, I beg your pardon, but it has, in most ladies' eyes. They seldom look beyond the outside of a man—more's the pity. But you have not answered my question.'

'I have been connected with soldiers all my life,' said Mrs. Bushe, in a low voice. 'It is quite natural that I should prefer them, is it not?'

'Well, I don't know. Now I should have thought that the more you saw of all that glitter, the more you would despise it.'

'That,' said Mrs. Bushe, 'is taking for granted that because a gentleman serves the king, and wears a handsome uniform, he must wear under it a bad heart and a weak mind. And that is—well, it is not generally the case, I think, Mr. Barrett.'

Humphrey looked at her doubtfully, but did not speak.

'A gentleman is a gentleman, and a good man is a good man,' she went on, rather prosaically, 'whether he wears a red coat or a black one. I do not see why we should set soldiers on one side, as people do, and civilians on the other. There is no real reason for it.'

'Except that it is the fashion, and that rules everybody,' said Humphrey.

Then after a minute's pause he asked her abruptly who Captain Crosby was.

'I can tell you nothing about his family, for I know nothing,' said Mrs. Bushe. 'He is an Irishman, and a good officer.'

'Sir George, I suppose, knows more?'

'At any rate he knows enough to satisfy him,' said Mrs. Bushe gravely. 'If you feel interested in Captain Crosby, you can inquire of him.'

'Well, I don't know about that. He must know of course, or he would not let him dance all night with his daughter.'

'An aide-de-camp is like the son of the house,' said Mrs. Bushe. 'There is nothing remarkable in that.'

'Ah, but you may nurse a serpent that will sting you,' answered Humphrey solemnly.

'That is a very disagreeable notion.'

'It is. Confoundedly disagreeable. But you can't deny that it's true.'

Humphrey now seemed to have exhausted his powers of conversation. He got up and walked off along the room, as if the sight of the dancers was too much for a reasonable being.

Mrs. Bushe could not feel sorry for Humphrey, but one must confess that she felt anxious about Letitia, and watched her and Crosby together as nervously as he did. Letitia's happiness, and Crosby's devotion, could hardly escape the blindest eyes. However, Sir George presently came back into the ballroom, and Mrs. Bushe was glad that he should see for himself; she could not make up her mind to speak to him, to bring poor dear Letitia into a scrape. One ought not to be surprised if girls were a little thoughtless, and gave themselves up to the pleasure of the moment, without considering possible consequences.

Everybody agreed that it was a delightful ball, though the drive home was rather more silent than the drive there had been.

Letitia took off her wraps, and came and stood by her cousin's fire, gazing into it for a minute or two rather dreamily. It was so unusual for her to look thoughtful that Mrs. Bushe was rather alarmed.

'Are you tired, Letitia?' she said.

'No. Cousin Florinda, I think Humphrey Barrett is without exception the most odious man—'

'My dear, after all their hospitality!'

'Well, I cannot help it. A man must be odious who sees you

don't like him, and yet plagues and torments you with his politeness. I hope I shall never go to the house again.'

Mrs. Bushe was silent, and only hoped that this violent hatred of Humphrey Barrett did not mean an opposite feeling for somebody else.

'Well, poor man,' she said at last, as Letitia also remained silent, 'it is a pity that he troubled himself to be attentive to you. He meant well, no doubt.'

'He certainly is the most disagreeable person I ever met,' said Letitia. 'Just look at the contrast between him and Captain Crosby.'

'My dear, such remarks on gentlemen do not come well from a young girl like you.'

Mrs. Bushe spoke very gravely and gently. Letitia coloured, but looked up with her fearless open eyes.

'You think I don't know what I am talking about, and am only fanciful,' she said. 'But I have good reason, I can tell you. Did you see that little affair at the cloak-room door?'

'No; what was it?' said Florinda, instantly interested, and forgetting her function of reprover.

'Well, you had gone on with Mr. Barrett. Humphrey, I declare to you, was nowhere to be seen. Papa was in the middle of the hall, talking to that old Admiral. Captain Crosby had my shawl in his hand, and was just going to put it over my shoulders, when Humphrey started round some corner and literally snatched it from him. "That is my business, sir," he said, in the voice of an old bear. O cousin Florinda, Captain Crosby behaved so well. I was in a horrid fright, as you may suppose. I turned round and looked at them, and even

thought of crossing over at once to papa, for their faces were as red as fire. But he saw that I was frightened, and he said, in the coolest quietest way, "Pardon me, sir. I was not aware that you were close by." Humphrey did not say a word; but the scowl on his face was too hideous and dreadful. I was obliged to take his arm, and to let him bring me down the steps, but I assure you I could hardly say good-night civilly. My dear, it was plain to me that Humphrey Barrett wanted to pick a quarrel with Captain Crosby; and he would have succeeded too, if I had not been there.'

'I am glad Captain Crosby behaved so well—so like a gentleman.'

'I wonder if he will say anything about it to papa?'

'I think not. No; he will probably never mention it again. I am very sorry, my dear, that you should have been so upset. Mr. Humphrey Barrett will be sorry too, I daresay, to-morrow.'

'Not he; it was just like him,' said Letitia. 'Tell me, cousin Florinda,'—laughing a little,—'is that a usual way of—of—trying to make oneself agreeable to a lady?'

'Not if one thinks about it, I imagine. But there are things, you know, which put people out of sorts and make them forget themselves. Probably the poor young man did not enjoy the ball quite so much as he expected.'

'Then I am sure he was very selfish,' said Letitia. Her good spirits seemed to have returned; she smiled sweetly, and kissed her cousin in a sudden little overflow of happiness and affection. 'Good-night. I'm going to bed,' said she; 'but I can't feel sure about sleeping.'

Mrs. Bushe would not keep her, and dared not ask any more

questions about her enjoyment of the ball. But she stole into the inner room on her nightly visit an hour later, and found her dear charge sleeping peacefully.

CHAPTER IV.

CROSBY IN DIFFICULTIES.

SIR GEORGE and his aide-de-camp sat together next morning in the library, writing letters. The sun was shining outside, and Letitia in her scarlet cloak passed like a winter fairy up and down the white paths. Once she came so near the windows that Crosby's eyes met hers, and they both smiled and coloured a little at the happy accident. Sir George, who with all his quick sight in military matters—perhaps because of it—was wonderfully blind in such things as these, went on writing large and black, and saw nothing. Presently he folded his last letter, addressed and sealed it, got up, walked along the room and back again.

'You had a pleasant evening, Crosby?' he said. 'I did not know you were so much of a dancing man.'

There was some consciousness in Crosby's bright blue eyes as he looked up at his chief.

'Well, sir, it was a very pleasant party,' he said, smiling. 'At these country houses one does not always meet so many pretty and well-dressed people. The ladies were very agreeable too, and drew one out in spite of oneself.'

'Don't make excuses. I was glad to see that you entered into it heartily. What did you think of the Barretts themselves? My own opinion of them is pretty decided; but I should be glad to hear yours.'

'They seem to be—excellent people,' said Crosby.

'You are not so foolish as my daughter is—to be influenced by looks, and so on.'

'Looks!' said Crosby, more cheerfully. 'The young ladies are very good-looking, and Mrs. Barrett has no doubt been handsome. Good forehead, good nose, some character in her face.'

Sir George smiled.

'Poor Mrs. Barrett! Don't know about that. But the girls certainly have good figures and good complexions. And Barrett told me they would have seven or eight hundred a year each. Not a bad recommendation. If it was not so very much better for young men in our profession to be unmarried, I should say you could not do a wiser thing.'

'Good heavens, sir!' muttered Crosby.

'That had not occurred to you? Well, perhaps you are right. Did you make much acquaintance with young Barrett?'

'Not very much.'

Sir George was marching slowly up and down a small space between the table and the fire. Crosby, in his place at the other side of the table, leaned his head on his hand, and stared half in amusement, half in alarm, at his chief's straight tight figure, at the sharply-cut mouth from which such strange things came out. Marry one of the Miss Barretts! Was Sir George really so blind? Or—horrid thought suddenly flashing in—was Letitia's fate in any fearful way decided already? He must know that at all costs; and then—Crosby against the world!

'Young Barrett won't set the Thames on fire, I suspect,' he said presently.

'Now, there I believe you to be mistaken,' said Sir George, suddenly turning upon him. 'These hasty judgments generally are.'

I don't mean to say that there are not many cleverer men in England than Humphrey Barrett. You yourself have much more brilliancy, quickness, that kind of thing. But for sound sense, Crosby, for knowing the right thing and doing it, for resolution and independence of character, for making his way—and that's a talent in itself—I would back Humphrey against you.'

'I am sorry you think me such a fool, sir,' said Crosby, smiling.

'You know what I think of you well enough. We won't argue that point. All I say is that Humphrey has the talents most useful to himself. You, my dear Crosby, have those that are pleasantest to me. I should be confoundedly sorry to have an obstinate dog like Humphrey for my aide-de-camp.'

'I am obliged to you,' said Crosby, quite touched; for this was a great deal from Sir George.

'These Barretts are an old family,' the General went on. 'And in one thing they are very different from most old families: they have always been careful people, and every generation is richer than the one before it. When Humphrey marries, his father means to allow him five thousand a year.'

'Very handsome,' said Crosby, as Sir George paused. 'And being such a prudent fellow he won't spend it foolishly.'

'No.'

Sir George poked the fire, and stood looking into it as he went on talking.

'I had a good deal of talk with Mr. Barrett last night on these matters. He broached the subject himself. You know me well enough to be aware that I am not a rich man, Crosby, and that it is—a—advisable that Letitia should marry well. She has no idea of

household management; it is not in her character, and Mrs. Bushe has not succeeded in doing her much good in that way. Now this is a very good match for her. It has been laid before me in the most open and honourable way, both by Humphrey Barrett and his father. Their ideas are most liberal—'

Crosby jumped up, and interrupted his chief with an exclamation,

'Humphrey Barrett marry Miss Monkton!'

'Why not?' said Sir George.

'Forgive me, sir. One sometimes feels surprise without being able to give a reason. It seemed somehow incongruous,' said the young man.

'Incongruous or not—I don't understand your modern phraseology; and what you mean by "incongruous" is a mystery to me—however it may strike you, it is very nearly a settled thing. I expect Humphrey here this afternoon, and I hope at least, from my long knowledge of Mrs. Bushe, that she has brought Letitia up to consider obedience a duty. Old-fashioned, I know; but I am not aware that the Ten Commandments have yet been done away with. Perhaps you are surprised at my mentioning them in common life. Incongruous, is it?'

'Not at all, sir. You are very good to place so much confidence in me. I can only hope that Miss Monkton will be as happy as—she deserves to be.'

After this Captain Crosby escaped from the library, and went for a walk to cool his brain and decide what was to be done.

He did not believe for an instant that a spirited girl like Letitia would let herself be married to a clodhopping lout like Humphrey Barrett; but there was no knowing to what lengths Sir

George, with his military ideas, would carry parental authority, and Mrs. Bushe was too timid to interfere.

'My lovely darling, there is only me to save you,' Crosby soliloquised; 'and by heaven it shall be done! O, if it were but six weeks hence! The three years will be over then, and I shall defy Humphrey Barrett and all his advantages! But what is to be done now? I must wait a little. I must see the turn things are taking—how she likes the lout's visit this afternoon—she hated him cordially enough last night, thick-headed clown! I wish I had been hanged twenty times before I laid that wager. I might have known it would bring me into some fool's scrape like this. But after all it is worth any trouble to win such a sweet angel as this. My wit against Barrett's, not a bad encounter for me.'

It seemed as if Captain Crosby had not a bad opinion of himself. Perhaps a little boastfulness is among the faults of his charming race; but in a perfect gentleman like him it never could offend any one, and was only in fact a happy courage and confidence in himself.

He took a very long walk, thinking that he might as well be out of the way in the afternoon. Humphrey Barrett and himself would be better apart. So, having started before one o'clock, he wandered all round the country, very much to the surprise of those country-folks who met him making his way through their snowy lanes.

He had to ask his way several times, but did not get much information from the shy stolid people. One friend he made, however, a sturdy old farmer, who overtook him driving home from market in his smart gig,

drawn by a strong handsome horse which Crosby noticed and admired. In reply to his question about the way, the farmer told him to jump up; and for four miles or so they drove together, talking in the most friendly manner, till they came near a picturesque mass of stone farmhouse and buildings, with a square garden bordered by clipped yew-trees. It was already almost dusk, and the cheerfulest firelight gleamed out from the large kitchen window across the yard.

'Yon's my house,' said the farmer. 'My old woman will be glad to see ye, sir, if you'll turn in with me and have something to warm ye before you go on further.'

'No, thank you, not to-day,' said Crosby. 'It is getting late, and I must go on, though I feel very much tempted to accept your kindness.'

'Well, sir, if you're in this country again, and will give us a look any day, we shall be right glad to see you and talk a bit more over the war. I'm Farmer Pratt, and my house is called Jack's Croft.'

'Thank you, Farmer Pratt,' said Crosby. 'I shall be glad to renew my acquaintance with you, and with this capital horse of yours too.'

As he walked on down the road, while the farmer turned into his yard, he could not help looking back at the homestead as it lay there among its fields, with a few thatched cottages near it, all, for that time and that county, so tidy and comfortable. In contrast, at least, with certain farms that this young Irishman had in his mind's eye.

The white smoke curled so slowly and contentedly up into the soft gray air; the windows glowed red; the old dog had come

out wagging his tail to welcome his master home, and now stood looking after the stranger who had gone on his way; the great army of brown stacks defended the house on one side, the garden-walls and trees on the other; all was safe and strong and peaceful. Crosby looked, and then turned and walked on with long quick steps towards the chief object of his thoughts. What was she doing now?

CHAPTER V.

CROSBY'S CONFIDANTE.

THERE was something electric in the atmosphere of Sir George Monkton's household that evening. A storm was brewing, Crosby perceived, if it had not already begun. Sir George himself was silent and sulky; Letitia was sulky too and miserable; Mrs. Bushe was in a state of distress, casting anxious imploring looks from one to the other. Crosby talked, and she did her best to answer him, though feebly and absently. Letitia would not look up or speak.

After dinner Sir George had nothing to say; but leaned back in a chair by the fire and closed his eyes, a wonderful proceeding for any one so upright and lively. Crosby presently went into the drawing-room, and found Mrs. Bushe there alone. She glanced up rather nervously when he came in, and went on with her knitting.

'Sir George is not sociable this evening,' he said presently; 'so I have left him to his thoughts.'

'Ah—yes—so I see,' said Mrs. Bushe.

A silence of several minutes. Then Crosby, who was standing by the chimneypiece, bent towards

his companion with a sudden gravity and earnestness of manner.

'Mrs. Bushe, may I confide in you?'

'I think you had better not, indeed, Captain Crosby.' Florinda coloured, and answered hastily. But something in the young man's face seemed to appeal to her better feelings, and she went on, 'For Heaven's sake oblige me by avoiding these subjects! Say nothing. You can only make us all more unhappy than we are.'

'That would grieve me indeed. I do not quite agree with you; but I will be silent as to myself, if you wish it, for the present. I'll only ask you—what is it all about?'

'O, you know very well,' said Mrs. Bushe.

'Was young Barrett here this afternoon?'

Mrs. Bushe nodded.

'Sir George told me this morning that he was coming. And Miss Monkton? You are too kind to keep me in a state of uncertainty.'

'I really don't know, Captain Crosby. However, if Sir George told you so much—well, poor Letitia is not in good spirits, as you saw at dinner. She cannot bring herself to agree with her father in this affair. She is not so submissive, poor dear girl, as—Sir George is inclined to be angry with her. I am most deeply grieved. I can't think that he will insist.'

'No, he will never do anything quite so barbarous; it is impossible,' said Crosby. 'Now, I entreat you, listen to me. You understand *my* detestation of this young Barrett. Do you think Sir George's opinion of me is good enough to let me also come forward—to let his daughter choose between us?'

Mrs. Bushe lifted her eyes

slowly, looked at him, smiled, and shook her head. Poor dear Letitia, the choice would be only too easily made! Crosby, with every movement full of grace and distinction, with his handsome face full of eager generous excitement, his eyes bright with the true spirit of a lover in the olden times, ready to go through any danger for his lady's sake, to fight single-handed with a thousand men. Florinda was very sentimental, and of course he had all her feelings on his side.

'I know quite well,' she said, 'how highly Sir George thinks of you. If it was *only* personal! But you see there are so many things to be considered.'

'To be sure,' said Crosby. 'But you don't think all the advantages are on one side? You think there would be a chance for me?'

'Now you want me to pay you a compliment,' said Florinda. 'It is not a good thing; but I will say that I really wish you were Mr. Barrett, because I fear he will succeed in the end.'

'He will not, he shall not, Mrs. Bushe!' answered Crosby. 'Thank you; but indeed I would not change places with Barrett if he were three times as rich as he is. It would not answer at all. You don't understand me now, but you will some day. And you really think Sir George has made up his mind so strongly? There are other minds besides Sir George's. And if I chose I could make him change his.'

'Then I wonder that you don't,' said Mrs. Bushe, justly regarding this as a piece of Irish bravado. 'Seriously, though, I do feel very friendly towards you, and I think it is a sad pity that you have set your heart on this. You astonish me a little too. For surely it would hardly be prudent in you to think of marrying—a girl like

dear Letitia, too, who has no idea of the value of money, or anything else. I know what it is to be young and romantic,' Florinda went on, slightly bending her head. 'No one can enter into the feelings of young people more than I do, or know better how the wildest foolishness seems the only good and right and necessary thing. I have been afraid of this—your allowing yourself to become attached to Letitia. Sir George, I think, ought to have considered it too. Nothing so natural; yet unfortunately, you see, nothing so hopeless. Unless by some magic art you could, as you say, make Sir George change his mind.'

'Ah, well,' said Crosby, who had listened to her soft voice very patiently, 'I am not at liberty to say much, but this I will say. I shall never ask a lady to do anything wild or foolish in marrying me. Could this Barrett affair be put a stop to for six weeks or so, do you think?'

Mrs. Bushe was slightly startled by his manner in asking the last question: he looked up so suddenly, as if a new idea had flashed across him. She thought the poor young man was a little touched in his brain by the imminent loss of Letitia.

'I hardly see how it could be,' she said. 'What good would that do, except putting things off a little?'

Crosby did not answer this.

'What would Miss Monkton herself say to me, do you think?' he asked presently, with another quick look.

'Dear me,' said Florinda, colouring, 'I really can't answer that question.'

'But everything depends on that, you know,' said Crosby. 'I know at least from you, and from herself last night, what she thinks

of Barrett. Now what does she think of me ?

As Crosby's good angel—I think it was he—would have it, the drawing-room door was just then opened rather quickly, and Letitia herself came in. All her brightness had deserted her. She walked across the room, with heavy eyelids lowered, took up a screen, and sat down by the fire.

'What were you talking about?' she said, as the two who were there already fell into a rather awkward silence.

'I will tell you,' said Crosby, his voice trembling a little. 'I was asking Mrs. Bushe for a little encouragement, which she has hardly given me; yet I can't keep silence for want of it. I was asking her what you thought of me. Now I ask you.'

'Captain Crosby, for shame!' murmured Florinda.

It is doubtful whether either of them heard her.

'What I think of you!' said Letitia, looking up at him as he stood beside her, with the smile that had faded alive again in her eyes. 'I think you—hardly need ask that. We are very good friends, are we not?'

'I hope so,' said Crosby. 'But I want something more. I can't talk of being "good friends" with the star that must rule my whole life, when I see its light on the point of being extinguished for ever for me. Will you let me tell you how I admire, adore you, and what agony it gives me to hear of such plans for you?'

He spoke low and very earnestly. Poor dear Letitia, wildly conscious of a happiness almost too great for her, and at the same time of the deep black gulf of impossibility between her and it, rose up from her chair with a little cry, knelt down by Florinda, and hid her face in her lap. To Mrs.

Bushe the moment was agonising; her duty to Sir George in conflict with her sympathy for these two, touched beyond expression by Letitia's movement, by Crosby's appealing eyes.

'Will you not give me any answer?' he said, after one long minute of silence, during which Florinda bent over the girl with her arms clasped round her.

'O, what am I to say?' whispered Letitia; but to this Mrs. Bushe could give no response.

Crosby waited a moment, and then said,

'As to what you will say to me, I must leave that to yourself. I should like you to say to your father, "I cannot make this marriage you have planned for me; you must let me marry the man I love—Gerald Crosby."'

Letitia lifted up her lovely face then, and, still holding her cousin with one hand, gave the other to him with a look that told him all he wanted to know.

'Yes,' she said.

The person who seems most to deserve one's sympathy at that moment is Mrs. Bushe. What ought she to have done?

CHAPTER VI.

AN AWKWARD SECRET.

CROSBY would have found it a much easier business to storm a dozen French batteries one by one than to go to Sir George, against all the opposing circumstances, and ask him for his daughter. He had to do it, however, and he did it the next morning in the library. He told Sir George that ever since he had first had the honour of meeting Miss Monkton his affection had been unalterably hers. He talked rather grandly, while Sir George sat gravely lis-

tening to him, and ended by saying that he had the happiness of knowing that his affection was returned. Sir George was never violent; but this was a little too much for him. He used a few strong words, and asked whether Captain Crosby considered this the conduct of a gentleman.

'Indeed, that I do, sir,' answered Crosby promptly, with all the air of his country. 'Was I to stand by and see a lovely young lady sacrificed in a match that she abhors? That is asking too much of human nature.'

'And I suppose it would equally have been asking too much to ask you, in your position of confidence and with your doubtful prospects, not to fall in love with my daughter, or at least to hold your tongue upon it,' said Sir George.

'I should have been silent for some time longer,' said Crosby, 'had it not been for this Barrett affair, which made all my hopes depend on speaking at once.'

Sir George was silent for a minute or two. He was evidently very much vexed; but Crosby thought that on the whole there was no danger of being turned out of the house. His chief, in fact, was as fond of him as he could be of anybody; and all his vexation was not owing to the danger of his own pet plans. He stroked his face, he walked up and down, and grunted several times.

'Sit down, Crosby,' he said at last, 'and let us talk this over seriously. Why, what do you mean by "some time longer"? Do you expect to come into a fortune?'

'Not exactly, sir. Things may look better.'

'The army is a splendid profession,' said Sir George. 'But I am a poorer man than I was when I entered it; and your experience will probably be the

same. You will get steps in rank, though that is a slow business now that the war is over; but your expenses will rise at the same time. And you want to marry Letitia! Confound it, how can you be such a fool!'

Sir George was in a better temper now.

'Certainly,' said Crosby, 'my prospects in life don't look so well as Barrett's. But I feel convinced that you would never repent of giving your daughter to me.'

'Unfortunately I can't feel the same conviction,' said Sir George. 'You Irishmen are the most presuming fellows. Why, how could you keep a wife like Letitia? I should hear of nothing but debts.'

'You would hear of no debts, sir.'

'Upon my word, sir, you are amazingly confident. I am very angry with you, don't forget that. You have put this into Letitia's head, and I shall have more trouble with her than ever.'

Crosby smiled; he did not much care for that.

'No laughing matter, I can tell you,' said Sir George. 'Listen to me. We have always agreed very well, and if you could succeed in convincing me that you have anything to live on, I might think this over. Young people always do get their own way by sheer obstinacy, I believe. But if you don't succeed in satisfying me, the marriage with Humphrey Barrett shall go on. Letitia's objections to it are all nonsense. They are excellent people. She will get used to them and be very happy.'

Crosby looked rather thoughtfully into the fire. The smile had died away, and the brightness was gone from his face; he found himself close upon a serious difficulty, into which his chief's next words plunged him headlong.

'Perhaps you forget that we know nothing about you, your father, your family, and so on. I forgot it myself, to tell the truth. But under these circumstances I must ask you to give me a full account of yourself.'

Sir George had been talking lately in the business-like tone he generally used, with more and more good-nature in it as he went on, and realised how much he liked Crosby. But the young man's manner now brought a sudden sharpness into his eyes. He frowned suspiciously as Crosby stared into the fire, flushing slowly redder and redder. Suddenly he looked up. The expression of Sir George's face was not very reassuring; but there seemed to Crosby to be only one way out of his dilemma.

'You have known me long enough, Sir George,' he said, 'to trust my word. You have placed great confidence in me for months past, though for all you knew of him my father might have been a tinker.'

'Well, go on. Is he a tinker?' said Sir George. 'His son does him credit.'

Crosby smiled rather gravely.

'I lost my father some years ago,' he said; then there was another pause.

'Hang the fellow!' exclaimed Sir George, with an impatient movement. 'What's the meaning of all this! You are going quite the wrong way to work. I like truth and openness. If you are ashamed of your relations,

say so, and don't beat about the bush. What you mean by these proposals of yours, if you can't even give a straightforward account of your own family, is a puzzle to me indeed.'

'My greatest wish is to be candid with you,' declared Crosby. 'I am in a difficulty, and you will be generous enough to consider it. Circumstances make it almost impossible for me to say anything about my family at present. Six weeks hence I'll gladly tell you anything you may wish to know. At present will you take my word for it that my position and prospects in life are better than Barrett's; that, so far from being ashamed of my relations, I have every reason to be proud of them; and that these things only have made me bold enough to ask your daughter to be my wife?'

Sir George could not help being struck by the strength of truth and earnestness in Crosby's manner. But the absurdity and unreasonableness of what he said was still more striking.

'That is all very well,' said the General rather coldly. 'But you cannot expect me to consider it enough. I do not see what "circumstances" have to do with it. I must have the truth, sir, or hear no more of this. If there is any secret in the matter you can trust me.'

At this moment the butler opened the door, and announced Mr. Humphrey Barrett.

(To be continued.)

FROM THE ANTIPODES.

Harper's Creek.

DEAR CHARLEY,—Now I'm well away, and quit of fashion's scenes,
Of London life, and all the strife, for pleasure, that it means—
While sitting smoking peaceably, beneath a burning sun,
I'll write and tell you, Charley, why I left the life and fun.

I'd never pen these lines to you, and never tell you why,
Unless I were as dead to you as if I'd chanced to die.
You know I was erratic, as a boy and as a man;
But say I never told a lie—a mean one—*that* I can.

You recollect at Eton how we fought and then were friends;
The fleeting hate, the lasting love, 'tis how such fighting ends:
Well, from the day we both shook hands, the time we chummed
together,
I swore that I would stand by you in fair or dirty weather.

Excuse this scrawling, Charley; if you make it out at all
You'll fancy my caligraphy is going to the wall.
My table's not a davenport, the paper's plaguy tough;
Both pen and ink are primitive, and strictly in the rough.

And something somewhat hinders me from writing as I think;
My old retriever, Carlo, puts his paws into the ink,
And seems to say, when eyeing me with his peculiar look,
'You're getting rather civilised,' which wouldn't suit his book.

I've wandered from my subject, in my vacillating way—
'Just like him,' when you read this note, it's any odds you'll say:
To tell you why I left you all is what at first I meant,
And changed my rooms in Duke-street for the backwoods and a tent.

Well, Charley, 'twas a lady. 'Yes, of course,' again you say;
But don't anticipate, she never gave me yea nor nay;
No look, no word of love e'er passed, I knew it must not be;
She never had the slightest thought that she was loved by me.

You may surmise, correctly too, the lady loved another;
She did, full well; and he a man I looked on as a brother.
So now I'll tell you, Charley, why I came out here for life;
The lady whom I loved, and was not loved by, is—your wife!

Don't start, old friend, remember fiction's not so strange as fact;
'Twas fated, and I fled my fate; God helped me to the act.
So sit straight down, and mail me out the latest gossip quick;
Burn this, remember me to all, from yours till chaos, Dick.

HUDDART RUSSELL.

BADEN IN 1879.

THERE was a time, not so very long ago, when the mere mention of the coquettish summer paradise in the valley of the Oos suggested visions of prospective enjoyment to those who had not yet seen it, and recalled a host of delightful memories to those who had. It was, during the successive reigns of Bénazet the princely and Dupressoir the magnificent, the recognised El Dorado of cosmopolitan pleasure-seekers, the privileged resort from one year to another of all who had money to spend, and who, wise in their generation, and mindful of securing a proportionate *quid pro quo*, had long since decided that, for an advantageous investment of whatever balance on the right side they might have at their banker's, there was no place like Baden.

We had lost sight of this attractive spot since 1870, our farewell glimpse of it in that memorable year having been at early morning from a droschke about to convey us through the Black Forest to Wildbad, in order to catch the last available train to Switzerland, and from thence—for we had lingered until no other road was open to us—to Paris. From that date we had steadily declined to revisit it, instinctively dreading the probable results of the expedition; but feeling a few weeks ago the impulse strong upon us once more to behold the *cari luoghi* of bygone days, we yielded to the soft impeachment, and whatever disappointment we may have experienced, have only ourselves to thank for it.

Not that the first glance around

on leaving the railway-station is suggestive of any alteration in the general aspect of the place; on the contrary, all appears externally much as it did a dozen years back. You perceive the same hotels, the same shops, and every now and then a familiar face, a trifle older, perhaps, but probably less deteriorated by the march of time than your own. Middle Marx's library-windows still display their wonted stock of polyglot literature; the chairs in front of the Café Weber are occupied as of yore by thirsty souls imbibing *canettes* of pseudo-Bavarian beer, and the broad walk adjoining has its customary contingent of loungers, doing their best to neutralise the perfume of the orange-trees by an incessant consumption of cigarettes Rheinboldt. So far all seems unchanged; it is only when you examine the state of things a little more attentively that you are conscious of a certain unaccountable discrepancy between the Baden of 1870 and the Baden of to-day, and the first conviction of the difference begins to dawn upon you when you mount the steps of the 'Conversation,' and are politely requested to deposit half a mark (*Anglicè*, sixpence) by way of entrance-fee. This formality accomplished, you are at liberty to wander at will through the deserted halls, and find yourself mechanically listening for the chinking of coin in the room on the left, where the roulette-table used to stand, and wondering what has become of the hatchety-faced croupier with a head like a snipe, who once—and only once—favoured you by an-

nouncing the coming up of your especial number, thirty-six, four times running! You walk through the Salon des Fleurs into the reading-room, and discover a spectacled German deep in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, and an old lady in an antediluvian bonnet comfortably nodding over the *Kladderadatsch*; with these two exceptions you are literally alone, and, to all appearance, likely to remain so.

The silence and depressing influence of the locality are more than you can endure. You retrace your steps with an involuntary shudder, and, emerging on the terrace, take your seat on a vacant chair, and indulge in a bird's-eye view of the groups, few and far between, listlessly parading to and fro, and bordered on either side by rows of middle-aged damsels and matrons knitting as if for a wager, and occasionally glancing at the musicians in the *kiosk*, who are manfully wrestling with the difficulties of Herr Wagner's *Niebelungen*. You cannot for the life of you refrain from mentally comparing the strange medley of uncouth figures before you with the gay assemblage formerly enlivening the once fashionable promenade; and while vainly endeavouring to discern amid the motley throng a single well-dressed being, male or female, you begin to question the truth of the Panglossian philosophy, that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Not one solitary relic of olden time is there to connect the present with the past; of that joyous band of *habitués* inseparably associated in your memory with a Baden summer, not one is left to welcome you with a smile of recognition. Wiser than you, they have abandoned the sinking ship, and the valley of the Oos knows them no more. The jaunty ex-Imperial secretary, with the fresh-

est flower in his buttonhole and the smartest repartee on his tongue; the half-pay colonel at the Cour de Bade, who never sat down but at meals, and astonished the strollers in the Lichtenthal alley by performing strange gymnastic evolutions with his umbrella; the light-hearted but impecunious vicomte, who dined at the *table d'hôte* one day and with Duke Humphrey the next; the young Russian who spoke every language under the sun except his own, and corresponded weekly with half the newspapers in Europe; the beetle-browed banker from Carlsruhe and his fair-haired colleague from Vienna; the lively Ratazzi and the graceful Souwaroff,—where are they? *Où sont les neiges d'antan?*

There is no disguising the fact, the Baden of to-day is to all intents and purposes a very different place of resort from the pleasant Hades so eloquently chronicled by Eugène Guinot. Since 1870 it has gradually sunk to the level of the second category of German spas, and now depends exclusively for its powers of attraction on the natural beauties of its site. While Homburg, Wiesbaden, and even Ems, thanks to the efficacy of their springs, have succeeded in maintaining a certain sanitary reputation, their less fortunate rival possesses no corresponding advantages capable of reconciling its visitors to the enforced absence of the *tapis vert*. People who drink the waters form the exception rather than the rule, and were the band to cease to play from seven to eight A.M., it is a question if faith in the virtues of the 'whey cure' or 'bottled' Rippoldsau would be sufficient temptations to induce any but the most conscientious invalid to turn out in quest of an appetite for his matutinal rolls and coffee. Nor is there any particular

charm either in the amusements provided for the guests, or in the company assembled to profit by them. Once Eberstein, La Favorite, Gernsbach, and the other lions of the neighbourhood exhausted, and the stock of Bohemian glass on the promenade inspected, time is apt to hang heavy; and although some adventurous spirits manfully strive to combat the prevailing *ennui* by attempting what may be appropriately termed croquet under difficulties on an imperfectly mown grass-plot in the Lichtenthal alley, the majority are left pretty much to their own resources, or—harrowing alternative—the dismal solitude of the ‘Conversation’ reading-room.

Here, there, and everywhere, the Teuton element reigns supreme; the guttural intonations of the Rhenish vernacular fall gratingly on your ear whichever way you turn, varied by the occa-

sional nasal twang of a New-Yorker, or by a lamentable display of Gallic incompetency on the part of Messrs. Brown, Jones, and Robinson; nay, even the *Bade-Blatt*, formerly an acknowledged epitome of d’Hozier and Debrett, is now reduced to notify the arrivals of Herr Strumpf from Worms, and Frau Knoblauch from Ober-Ingelheim. The metamorphosis, in a word, is complete; the gyrations of the ivory ball are replaced by a mysteriously organised *baccarat*, of which, on the *timeo Danaos* principle, perhaps the less said the better; and the sole remaining memento of what Baden once was is a melancholy specimen of humanity, ex-myrmidon of the *roulette* and native of the ‘happy valley,’ whom we recognised, in the shirt-sleeves and apron of every-day commercial life, dispensing groceries to his fellow-townsmen.

REGIMENTAL LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A REGIMENTAL MARTYR,' 'A REGIMENTAL VALENTINE.'

VERY few people have any conception of how severe a school the Army is. I speak more especially of the mounted branch of the service, because popular writers of fiction are more fond of 'writing up' cavalry officers than any other.

One has grown intimately acquainted with life in the mess-room, as so many authors depict it. One has learned all the names officers are popularly supposed to bestow upon one another. There is always a colonel, old, white-haired, and singularly amiable, who is a sort of protecting father to all his officers. He looks after their love-affairs, of which, by the bye, in real, a chief is supposed to remain in blissful ignorance. He sees they are not 'put upon' by their seniors; is frequently spoken to as 'old fellow,' and very often falls in love with the young lady who has gained the affections of one of his 'subs' of, say, six weeks' standing.

Then comes the major; generally a woman-hater this. Why a major should invariably hold the fair sex in detestation is not often explained; but there the truth is, stern and unvarnished, and the reader has to make the best of it. Sometimes this woman-hater falls in love, and is transformed into a husband of the most exemplary description, but more often remains in his unpleasant character to the end of the chapter.

I wonder does it never occur to the writer that, in the natural course of events, a man fond of soldiering, and without home-ties,

must get promotion? In that case, does the major take up his predecessor's paternal line of action, and was the typical chief a woman-hater also, before he obtained his regiment?

Amongst the captains there are various characters; there is one who can do anything or everything. He can sing, hunt, fish, ride—he can win a steeple-chase on the veriest screw, by virtue of his brilliant riding; he can shoot, draw, and paint, act, dance, and do everything under the sun with equal perfection. He is one of those whom the gods love, and he does not die young. He is like the princess in the fairy tale, who was fortunate enough to have three fairy godmothers, for every luxury and blessing seems to have been showered down upon him. He is singularly handsome, too—generally of the type which, but for his moustaches, might serve for the face of a young duchess; he has more money than he can spend, which, as he is in a cavalry regiment, must be considerable. He has a wonderful constitution too, for he can drink all night—brandy-and-sodas, save the mark!—and yet he is up with the lark in the morning, at some innocent and healthful pursuit, which, though one might find occupying a schoolboy, never, in this world, induced an officer, after a night of unlimited brandy-and-soda, to turn out of his comfortable bed until the very last moment.

And the most wonderful of all

is that, in spite of these excesses, our hero's eyes never lose their brightness or their clearness; his hand and aim are invariably as steady as a rock. To finish the list of this gentleman's charms, he is an accomplished flirt; his very name is a terror to mothers and husbands, and yet he usually ends by marrying some insipid unformed child just out of the school-room, and, like the married major, settles down into a steady-going country squire, without a wish or an idea beyond his childish wife, his hunting, and his short-horns; in fact, he sinks into a state of bucolic stupidity, and altogether forgets the days when he was the boast—very frequently the toast—of 'ours,' and was known far and wide as 'Beauty' so and so.

Then there is another captain who smokes. Of him we do not see very much; his life, his thoughts, his conversation, and his character may be summed up in the single word *smoke*; and so very properly his existence, for us, is but hazy.

The senior subaltern and his duties are utterly ignored; but most prominent of all these military children of fancy is the young cornet. He is very young, this wonderful boy, and he has a decided tendency to go wrong; but every one pets him and makes much of him, and he is popularly known as 'Baby' or 'Prettyface,' sometimes as 'the Cherub' or 'the Seraph.' For this youth the protecting friendliness of the fatherly colonel comes into play, and it is wonderful how many duties and infringements he is excused. He, like our friend the popular captain, is fair to look upon, being of the duchess type, graceful in bearing, and dainty in colouring.

Lastly, we have the regimental surgeon, whom we must one and all own a perfect monstrosity.

He is lanky, ugly, ill-dressed, speaks with a strong brogue, or maybe a Tyne-side twang or Northumbrian burr, and altogether excites the curiosity of the reader as to how such a man attained his position.

Sometimes we are admitted into the troop-rooms, and the chief feature we find there is the blind devotion of the men to the officers, or *one* officer in particular; not only blind devotion, but passionate admiration and keen interest in all their proceedings.

How very, very different is real life in a barrack! How respectful the 'sir' with which the colonel and the major are addressed! How very different is the behaviour of the junior officers, and how mercilessly severe are the manner and judgments of 'the senior sub'!

The very slightest infringement of regimental rules is visited with an ante-room court-martial; and the punishments awarded are no mere child's-play; they are often corporal, and in all cases severe.

In one regiment, which for convenience' sake we will call the Cuirassiers, two subs, lately joined, omitted to rise for early stables when it was their turn for duty as orderly-officers. The result was, not that these two only were reprimanded, but that *the whole of the subalterns* were called into the orderly-room, and, to use their own language, were 'jolly well slated.' The two delinquents were not especially mentioned, and thought to hear no more of the matter. Not so. The others simply bided their time until midnight, when, the senior officers having retired, an ante-room court-martial was called, and the defaulters were brought up for trial, and, being convicted, sentenced to punishment. And in what did that punishment consist?

Not in a 'slating,' but each was sentenced to receive three strokes of a birch rod from every member of the court-martial; that is, about thirty strokes each, and *well laid on!*

As soon as a subaltern joins his regiment, he is submitted to a course of practical jokes, ill-treatment, and bullying all round, to which he must offer no resistance, or his career will be a short one. For instance, a few years ago a man named Royd joined this same regiment, and on his first evening amongst his new comrades was 'drawn.' That is to say, he was visited in his room during the small hours of the morning and ordered to go down into the ante-room for court-martial, the charge against him being that he had risen from the dinner-table whilst an officer senior to him remained sitting. Royd, being of huge stature and gigantic strength, stoutly resisted, and eventually picked up the largest man in the room, carried him out on to the landing, and dropped him over the baluster on to the flagged passage below. The effect was magical; in an instant all the hubbub was hushed, and the injured man was raised. Fortunately the result was nothing worse than a sprained ankle and a severely-bruised hip. He took it very quietly, and merely looked up at Royd, who was standing near, and said coolly, 'I'll have you out for this.'

Very possibly the new-comer did not think much of the threat, but his career was virtually over; at every hour of the day and night did he have cause to repent that hasty action, and during the autumn manœuvres of that year the climax came. It was in this wise: on a pouring wet day, or rather night, he had to visit the pickets, and as, for some reason, he

had no horse, was compelled to do the rounds on foot. On coming in after a tramp of some miles thoroughly soaked and tired out, he was ordered to visit yet another outlying picket six or seven miles away. Then was his tormentor's opportunity; he would not permit him to take a troop horse, though he himself was riding. Tired, cold, and wet, this young subaltern reached the picket; something went wrong, as did his temper, and he swore at one of the men. His fate was sealed. His senior immediately put him under arrest, and he was told by the colonel that he must send in his papers or undergo trial by court-martial. Of course he left the regiment.

A young officer is not even permitted to dress himself as he pleases. It was reported in the ante-room of the Cuirassiers that one of the junior officers had been seen in Piccadilly wearing an inverness cloak. On his return from town he was ordered by the senior captain to produce the article in question, and it was burnt before his eyes.

'Whilst you are an officer of the Cuirassiers, sir,' said the senior captain, 'you will dress as a gentleman, and not as if you had bought your clothes out of a slop-shop in Bloomsbury.'

Sometimes a newly-joined officer attempts the hail-fellow-well-met style of intercourse with his seniors, but his intentions are nipped in the bud with marvellous celerity. Such an one joined the Cuirassiers during the leave season, and tried his system upon the major.

'Ah, Houghton,' said he, one day after lunch, while several officers, including the major, were standing about the ante-room fire, 'will you go down to the rink with me this afternoon?'

The cool audacity of this proposal stopped every tongue in the room, and all listened breathlessly for the major's reply.

'I don't mind,' he said quietly, much more quietly than they expected, but probably he wished to see how far this young gentleman's assurance would take him.

'Ah, very well. I'll be ready about four o'clock, so *come round to my rooms and look me up.*'

This was a matter for the senior sub's notice, and although he was not in the room at the time, the conversation was quickly reported to him, and he as quickly sent for the delinquent.

'Now look here, young chap,' he began, 'this sort of thing won't do at all. If the major asks you to go anywhere with him, you will tell him whether you'll go or you won't, but you'll not propose going to the rink or anywhere else with him. And another thing, when you address him you will say "major" or "sir." I am very much astonished that the major did not speak to you himself about it.'

Then life in a barrack is by no means such an existence of ease, luxury, and time-killing as novelists would fain make us believe. Take, for example, the duties of the orderly officer for the day. He must rise at six o'clock for early stables, or the whole of the subalterns suffer in consequence; then he has to go round the breakfasts, see that they are all right and hear any complaints; then if it is not a field-day he must ride with the troops to watering order; he must visit the hospital; then come morning stables, and as likely as not, if he be stationed at Aldershot or Colchester, he will be on court-martial, for which he has all the nuisance of getting into full dress, and may think himself very lucky if he miss the

orderly-room business and the round of the dinners. In the afternoon he must again visit the hospital, and probably there will be a parade; certainly he will have the picket to mount, and as likely as not he will have to walk a mile or so to do it. Then he has the first hour's rest of the day, and at half-past five he must turn out again for afternoon stables and the 'teas;' then hospital once more. He does eat his dinner in peace, but he must receive the watch-setting reports and mount the guard ere bedtime. Nor should mention be omitted of the number of times the orderly officer has to sign his name and to change his uniform. If his turn fall upon Sunday he must accompany the commanding officer round the married quarters, but as some compensation for that he escapes church parade, and so is spared the trouble of getting into full-dress—no light matter, more especially in the item of the boots.

The imposition of fines is another method of punishing infringements of regimental rules. If an officer is not properly shaven, if he puts on any part of his uniform wrongly, he must pay for the champagne drunk at dinner that evening. This fine is also enforced for swearing or using bad language in the presence of the chaplain or any senior officer, and also for dropping the sword. On certain occasions an officer must pay when it is not a case of fining. If he gets promotion, if he brings home the regiment from the drill field for the first time as commanding officer, if he wins a race, or is going to be married, at all such times he has to 'stand' champagne.

Our novelists do well to give their military heroes an inexhaustible rent-roll. There are very few such out of the Guards, and

soldier servants have to be very well up in methods of getting rid of duns and such other unwelcome visitors as their masters do not care to be at home to.

Another terrible mistake made by novelists is the magnificence with which they surround their heroes in quarters. If such could but once peep into the room (for an officer has seldom but one room, even if he is no longer a subaltern, excepting at Colchester, where each cavalry officer has a room about 12 feet by 14 and a tiny dressing-room, just half that size) of any ordinary Hussar, Dragoon, or Lancer, he or she—I suspect it is most often the women who are so fond of soldier heroes—would never again depict him in rooms resembling a very fine lady's boudoir. O the patched walls, the bare paint, the marks on the door where the lock gave way the last time the owner was 'drawn' by his comrades, the blackened ceiling, the almost invariable absence of window-blinds, the miserable regulation fender fastened to the floor, the more miserable regulation coal-scuttle, and, most miserable of all, the regulation barrack chairs! It is all so wonderfully unlike the barrack-room of fiction. There is the rickety crib of a bed, made to take in pieces upon occasion, and which by daytime the servant, with the aid of cretonne covers for the pillows and a fur carriage rug, converts into a sofa; and there is the dressing-table, likewise hung all round with cretonne, and which strikes one as being remarkably high for its purpose. Just pull the cretonne curtain a little, and half the front will open, showing you that it is but a make-believe table after all, and, stripped of its hangings, would stand forth a packing-case! Well, it is both a toilette-table and a

wardrobe now, for piled upon the shelves which have been put in temporarily are the various suits of clothes belonging to the owner of the room.

Then over there, on the other side of the room, is the inevitable chest of drawers, which, when travelling, just fit nicely inside the dressing-table. They are exactly like the drawers in every room in the barracks; are of mahogany, have brass handles, and a despatch-box and writing-desk combined in the middle drawer at the top. Then the lid of our friend's bath, being fitted with three legs which screw in and out at pleasure, makes a very convenient writing-table if covered with a cloth, and into the bath itself, for travelling, the legs go, together with the tripod, washing-stand, and the tin basin and ewer. Some officers have pianos, but they are always hired; and most officers have a few pictures and little trifles to scatter about their room. For instance, a couple of fur rugs thrown across the huge barrack arm-chairs take off from their ugliness much; and if a soldier is fortunate enough to know a lady who will work him a cover for his cot, his room will look much more presentable. And yet at best a soldier's room is but a 'shake-down;' and if he be rich or poor, he seldom attempts to make it otherwise. The handsomest room I ever saw in barracks was that of a captain of Dragoons; in fact, he had been fortunate enough to secure two large rooms, those which, if he had required them, would have been allotted to the major. This man was very rich, and had certainly taken a good deal of trouble to make his rooms habitable, and yet—well, they were only barrack-rooms. There were the usual make-shifts; and when the fur

rug slipped off the great easy chair in which I sat, I saw the broad straps which served for arms, and which told me it was just the same as I had seen in barrack-rooms so many times before.

The rooms of a well-known colonel of cavalry, a man who now possesses a title and thirty thousand a year, were simply beggarly, not nearly so handsome as was the one little room of his Vet., of which I had just a glimpse. And why? Because one room was the man's home; the other was not.

One more word and I have done; it concerns the fancy names bestowed upon soldiers in novels. They are all *fancy* names, and in real life do not exist. In no case have I ever known a name given in recognition of a man's personal comeliness, such as Cherub, Beauty, Adonis, Apollo, Pretty-face, and the like. One of the handsomest men I ever knew was commonly known as The Spider. Why, I cannot tell—not because he was like one. In closing, I will give a few names I have actually

known: The Infant (weighing twenty-one stone), The Cob, David, The Winter Apple, King Kobo, Old Muzzie, The Spider, Landy-fandy-Widdan, Sprouts, Bole, The Admiral, Paddy K——, Tin Whistle, Illigant John of Bath, The Lady-killer, Mother Hubbard, Billy Buttons, Piggie, Alphabet. Most frequently men's own names are abbreviated; thus at one time in a distinguished Lancer regiment there were any amount of Bills and Billys. In another of Hussars, the name of David prevailed; nearly all were Davids, even a racehorse belonging to one of the officers.

When the personal appearance of an officer is not prepossessing, a name is quickly found for him. Any remark on the subject of 'looks' meets with a rejoinder sharp and to the point. Said one Cuirassier to another,

'Why, your nose is so stuck up, one might hang one's hat on it.'

'Well, my dear chap,' was the ready reply, 'one certainly couldn't on yours.'

And it was true enough.

THE STORY OF A GREAT PEST.

IN one of Bulwer Lytton's most interesting novels an account is given of an Italian exile who, though finding a comfortable home in a lovely south-of-England village, always yearned after the manners and customs of his native land. With the assistance of an old servant he cultivated a few vines, and succeeded in making some wine from the grapes.

The squire of the village happening to call one day, the Italian, with generous hospitality, pressed the local magnate to partake of this precious decoction. A glass was enough. Poor Mr. Hazeldean did not recover from the effects thereof until he had a bill at the apothecary's as long as his arm. Ever after did he solemnly warn his friends, on peril of their lives, 'never to take any of that Ricky-bocky's stuff.'

There are yet people in England—as a rule relics of the good old 'three-bottle' days—who hold the same opinion of the finest French vintages as did the poor squire of Riccabocca's nectar. Some of them, indeed, profess to prefer those wondrous compounds yclept Hamburg 'port' and 'sherry.' Happy beings! no failure of the grape-crop need alarm them, should the vines of the whole world perish. Still would there be Hamburg port and sherry.

It may, however, interest even those members of the community to read something of a subject which for several years has deeply occupied the attention of the inhabitants and governments of all wine-growing countries. I speak of the malady now devastating the vineyards of fair France.

All highly-cultivated plants appear peculiarly susceptible to the attacks of diseases and insects nearly harmless to the more robust constitutions of wild varieties. The vine is no exception to this law of nature. In an interesting work on viticulture, *La Vigne dans le Bordelais*, the following list is given of insects alone 'qui nuisent à la vigne': le hanneton vulgaire, l'euchlore, l'attélabe, l'otiorynque sillonné, l'eumolpe de la vigne, l'altise des potagers, la cochenille de la vigne, la barbitiste porte-selle, la guêpe commune, les chenilles, les cochyliis de la grappe, les noctuelles, les bombyx, la pyrale de la vigne.

After perusing such a list one is surprised that the unfortunate vignerons succeed, to a certain extent, in neutralising the ravages of so formidable a phalanx of destroyers. Even the above lengthy catalogue does not include two of the vine's most destructive scourges.

In 1845 a Mr. Tucker of Margate discovered that his vines were being killed by a vegetable parasite of fungoid growth, which covered the grapes and leaves with a whitish network. In 1849 this cryptogame parasite (named the *oidium Tuckeri*) appeared in France, and, rapidly spreading over a great portion of the vine-growing districts, causing immense damage, it soon reached Madeira, and in a very short space of time utterly destroyed the renowned vineyards of that island, blotting it out for several years from the list of wine-producing countries. The French vignerons were more fortunate; for, after the *oidium Tuckeri* had devastated a large

area of the wine-growing districts, it was discovered that the application of sulphur to the leaves and berries attacked was a sure remedy.

In 1865 some vineyards in the department of the Gard were attacked by a mysterious and much more destructive malady. It was not until 1868 that M. Planchon, 'Professeur des Sciences à Montpellier,' discovered this malady was caused by an insect named by him the 'phylloxera vastatrix.'

Compelled by bad health to seek a refuge in a mild climate from our frosts and fogs, the writer, during 1874 and 1875, wandered for many months about the most severely attacked departments, and, aided by letters of introduction to several vineyard-proprietors, had many opportunities of observing on these and subsequent visits the practical effects of the numerous efforts made to arrest the progress of the fearful scourge which forms the subject of this paper.

It would be impossible in a brief essay to give anything like a complete account of this malady. (The literature on the subject would already fill a large library.) I will therefore endeavour to put before my readers as clearly as possible a few facts as to the phylloxera, the progress it has made up to the present time, and some of the various means employed in the attempt to destroy or neutralise the effects of this marvellous insect.

After a little experience it becomes during the early summer quite an easy matter to detect, at even a considerable distance, those vineyards seriously suffering from the attacks of the phylloxera by the bright red and yellow of their foliage.

The effect is often very curious. Perhaps you may see on the same

hillside several clumps of this autumnal-tinted foliage cropping out from the bright green of the healthier vines. If the vineyard has been suffering from the disease for a year or two you may find upon closer inspection a vine with a few feeble shoots, but neither grapes nor leaves; the next may be a sickly plant with withered and spotted foliage. Further on you may come to a row of apparently healthy vines; I say apparently, for they too may have the insects working away at them.

Although it is always possible to detect the disease when well developed by the condition of the leaves and shoots, in all cases to find the *cause* the soil must be turned up; the examiner will then find on and around the roots a kind of yellow dust (something like the mites in an ancient cheese), which, if pressed between the fingers, leaves on them a yellow stain. This dust consists of countless numbers of wingless phylloxera, or 'phylloxera aptère.' The writer could never distinguish individual insects without the aid of a magnifier; but the French peasants, who hold that to burn candles is a simple waste, and being great believers in the old adage, 'Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,' possess eyes undimmed by the 'flare of the gas or the flickering flame of the midnight oil,' appear to distinguish their form easily.

The phylloxera aptère has somewhat the appearance of a tortoise, possessing long legs and a trunk; the back is divided into squares, from which project little excrescences. The head is slightly bent under the body, and the brown eyes have numerous facettes. The existence of these organs denotes that the insect, although habitually living underground, may some-

times come to the surface, and require to aid itself by the light of day (Balbiani). Projecting from the front of the head are two strong antennæ, which have four articulations; the first two large in diameter, but short; the last long and slender. The trunk is formed of four articulations, and is carried straight, or very often in an oblique direction, under the head. At the extremity is a sucker similar to that of a bug, which has four jointed lancets, used by the bug to cut in the skin, by the phylloxera to puncture the tender bark of the young shoots.

This species of the genus *phylloxera* multiply by virginal procreation (Lichtenstein). The insect, clinging to the surface of the bark, emits clusters of eggs from the extremity of the abdomen. These eggs are first of a beautiful sulphur yellow, but gradually turn a grayish and smoky tint. At the end of about ten days a larva—the reduced facsimile of its parent—issues from the egg. These young larvæ, even when first hatched, are of a restless and lively disposition, briskly moving their paws and antennæ. After three or four days the little larva chooses its position on the root, and, cutting into the bark with its lancets, begins sucking away at the sap. During a period of two or three days they shed their skins three times (Cornu). The insect becomes full grown in about three days, and when adult, lays during an unknown period about thirty eggs. It has been estimated by M. Balbiani that during the breeding season, which, in the south of France, lasts from about April to October, one insect increases to the enormous total of twenty-five to thirty millions. This fact readily explains the frightfully rapid increase of the disease.

During the months of June,

July, and sometimes as late as November, there appear, amid the egg-laying aptères, slender brown larvæ, which are finally transformed into elegant little gnats. These are the winged *phylloxera*. Although as to form and colour very similar to the aptère, they are considerably larger. The wings—which are four in number—reach beyond the body. The anterior are broad and rounded at the end; the posterior straighter and shorter. They are transparent, although a little opaque at the ends, and the insects agitate and unfold them vertically in the same manner as a butterfly. They turn and walk with such agility, that when examined under a microscope they are soon lost to view. It must not be imagined that these insects do not know how to manage their wings; on the contrary, they are wonderfully good fliers for their size, and doubtless soar up, when the currents of air transport them great distances, to propagate the disease and to furnish the seeds for the next year (Cornu).

Before their wings are quite fully developed these insects are supposed to crawl up from the roots, and to deposit under the leaves or on the little buds of the branches three or four eggs, from which soon appear most curious insects: they have neither trunk, wings, or even stomach; in fact, are simply apparatus for reproduction. They are male and female, and represent the sexual form of the *phylloxera*. After a short time the female deposits one egg under the bark of the shoots of the vine, and then expires at the side of the germ destined to perpetuate her race (Planchon). The vignerons call this the winter egg, and make every effort to destroy it.

Differing from the eggs of the *phylloxera* aptère, the solitary egg

deposited under the bark does not hatch until the following spring. This is the reason it is termed the 'winter' egg. During the month of April, in the climate of Bordeaux, the young phylloxeras just hatched from the winter eggs crawl to the sprouting vine-leaves, and produce by their pricking a gall which surrounds them. Soon after, finding the leaves too tough for their lancets, it is supposed they renounce outdoor life, and crawl down to the roots, to form heads of families of the underground phylloxeras. The exact time of this change is unknown, but certainly some time before the autumn. At all events, at whatever period this migration takes place, scientific men appear to agree in the opinion that the gall phylloxeras are transformed into the phylloxeras of the roots, and that these, issuing from the earth in a winged state, become in their turn, first the sexual insects, and then the winter eggs from which the gall phylloxeras are produced.

Thus we have the complete cycle of the multiple existence of these wonderful little insects, comprising all its phases of evolution and adaptations to changes of food, climate, and circumstances. It must, however, be admitted that the question of the duration of the different phases of this cycle is at present to a great extent a matter of supposition, as to which there is considerable divergence of opinion.

Appearing in the first instance (as I have already mentioned) in the Gard, the phylloxera rapidly spread over the neighbouring districts. As early as 1874 a Commission appointed by Government reported that the condition of affairs in that year was as follows: The department of the Vaucluse, one of the first and most seriously attacked, is nearly completely ruined. Of the thirty thousand

hectares (a hectare=two acres) of vines possessed by this department in 1865, there do not at the most remain more than two or three thousand. In the Gard the phylloxera exists nearly everywhere, and the production of the department does not amount to more than the half of an ordinary crop. The department of the Hérault, which alone furnishes in ordinary times more than a fifth of the total quantity of wine in France, is very seriously attacked. The departments of the Ardèche and the Bouches du Rhône are also suffering most severely. The department of the Var, where the disease spread during 1870 in the two *arrondissements* of Toulon and of Brignoles, has lately seen its third *arrondissement*, that of Draguinan, invaded. The department of the Basses Pyrénées has several cantons seriously attacked. The Rhône and the Isère commence feeling the plague at several points. In Corsica the terrible insect also made its appearance during last year, carried there, it is thought, on vines imported from the Var. In the south-east the fear of seeing the rich vineyards of the Gironde and the Deux Charentes devastated is every day more felt. The President of Agriculture of the Gironde, in the answer addressed by him to the questions of the Commission, estimated that the phylloxera had already spread over sixty communes of the department. In the department of the Charente Inférieure the disease also appears to have increased in area, especially in the *arrondissement* of Saintes.

In 1879 the condition of affairs is much more serious than in 1873. To the east, rushing like a torrent over the parched *terrains* of the Rhone valley, the phylloxera has devastated the vineyards of the Soane et Loire and Jura; it has

invaded the sacred vineyards of the Côte d'Or, where are grown the finest wines of that famed province, of which exclaimed the learned Erasmus: 'Ah, Bourgogne, heureuse mère des hommes, que tes mamelles ont de bon lait !' The fell disease has penetrated to the quiet Swiss valleys,* and as far north as Alsace; it has even been noted in Germany. Happily in these districts of long and severe winters, the phylloxera appears to make but slow progress. It is in the southern departments that the most severe losses have been sustained. Immense gaps have been made in the rich plains of Mar-sillargues and Lunel. The traveller from Tarascon to Montpellier now passes through a country of ruined vineyards. The phylloxera has also attacked the vineyards of Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Corsica. But in this paper I shall only treat of its ravages in France.

The *Bulletin de Statistique* for last January, a well-edited publication of the Ministry of Finance, contains the returns of the vintage of last year as drawn up by the gatherers of indirect taxes. The amount thus registered was only 48,700,000 hectolitres against 56,400,000 obtained in 1877, a diminution of 7,700,000. The average amount is 56,800,000 hectolitres, so that last year's vintage was as much as fourteen per cent under the average. This great falling off was chiefly due to the ravages of the phylloxera. The Armagnac, Bordelais, Périgord, Angoumois, and Saintonge wines are the chief sufferers. The department of the Hérault alone shows a diminution of 2,747,000 hectolitres, and the Gironde of 1,300,000. In the above-mentioned districts the yield per hec-

tare fell from twenty-five to thirty hectolitres to fifteen and twenty. Thus the phylloxera surrounds the very gates of Bordeaux, that metropolis of wine.

It must not be supposed that all the vines in this vast expanse of territory have been destroyed. Here and there are oases amid the ravaged vineyards; some have not even been attacked. Still the progress made by the phylloxera since its appearance, and its now perfectly well-known effects, unfortunately leave no doubt that as a rule a vineyard invaded by these marvellous insects is a 'gone coon.' Perhaps it may struggle against the disease for several years, according to the means of resistance it finds, either in its strength or certain conditions of climate; but once attacked by the phylloxera it must be nearly always condemned. With rare exceptions no vines, however situated or in whatever soil they are planted, are safe. Once established in a wine-growing district, the disease always ends by invading every portion, so that unless some really efficacious remedy be speedily found, the larger part of the French vineyards will ere long have ceased to exist. Thus, as the sands of the great desert, which of old overwhelmed palaces and humble homesteads alike, this phalanx of countless multitudes each day noiselessly devastates the vineyards of the rich capitalist or the frugal peasant. In one district, borne on the wings of some favouring breeze, it makes a mighty stride, spreading ruin and desolation in its path; in another it moves more slowly on, but ever increasing, ever encroaching.

Having briefly described the habits of the phylloxera, the manner in which it attacks the vines, and the immense progress it has made within the last few

* See an interesting letter from the Geneva correspondent of the *Times*, Sept. 8.

years, I will now pass on to the various means employed in attempts to destroy the destructive insect or to nullify its effects.

Before doing so I will, however, mention that, in spite of the adverse opinion of scientific men, many intelligent French wine-growers have expressed to me their firm conviction that had France possessed a law for the protection of insectivorous birds, the disease would never have assumed the alarming proportions it now presents. Be this as it may, the ruthless manner in which all small birds are destroyed throughout the southern departments is quite lamentable. I have rambled for miles through vineyards and olive-groves, I have passed days in the hills amid the cork woods, without seeing or hearing a single bird, with the exception of a few miserable-looking magpies, upon which even French sportsmen refuse to waste powder and shot. It was my fortune to be sojourning in a quaint little town of the Riviera, close to the shores of the Mediterranean, when one day came the news that a flock of larks had appeared in the neighbourhood. The whole place was in a state of commotion. Where had they been seen? how large was the flock? were the themes of every conversation. Forth came the chasseurs of the community—that is to say, nearly every male in the town. From every quarter came people armed with weapons ‘wondrous strange,’ all eager for the fray, all eager to kill. Here an aspiring youngster struggled along with a huge bell-mouthed blunderbuss almost large enough in the bore to hold its owner. M. Guérin the tailor, a little lame gentleman of Communist principles, came hurrying across the ‘place’ with a sportsman whose long barrelled flintlock musket

might have dated from the time of the Camisards. It was evidently *de rigueur* to have a dog, for each noble lover of *le sport* was either followed by or dragged one behind him. And a motley crew they were, ranging from the half-starved cur of the little tailor to the well-bred *chien de chasse* of Monsieur Clavet, our *notaire*; for even he was not proof against the temptation of such a chance to show off his new breechloader, and had quitted his musty deeds to sally forth. But what a transformation! Like some sad-coloured grub which suddenly bursts forth into a gorgeous butterfly, the sober demure lawyer, ordinarily arrayed in black, a seedy black, had become a dashing individual, resplendent in a brown-velveteen suit. His head was adorned with a rakish brigand-hat, bearing a cock’s feather—victim, perhaps, of his skill. His manly calves were guarded by leggings of untanned leather; whilst from his shoulders hung an elaborate game-bag, well garnished with bread, a bottle of wine, and a huge lump of ‘saucisson de Lyon’ from old Madame Trotobat’s, the *charcutière* in the Rue de Paradis; for, as says the witty Alexandre Dumas, in his amusing *Impressions de Voyage dans le Midi*, the sportsmen of the south differ from others in that they usually start with their game-bags full, and bring them back empty!

However, in this instance there was immense slaughter, and for a considerable period the modest *menu* of our *table d’hôte* boasted of ‘gibier’ on its list. A facetious Yankee observed that ‘gibier’ was a very comprehensive term, for it was applied to anything, from a haunch of venison to a robin on toast. As a rule, the weapons used by the worthy sportsmen of the south are more calculated to

kill the marksman than the bird aimed at. Nestling in the lovely valleys of the Riviera—where olive-groves cover the earth as a cuirass of bronze, studded here and there with the bright green of some spreading fig-tree or graceful almond; where the terraced vineyards climb up tier over tier, like the seats of some Roman amphitheatre, until they are lost amid the darker tints of the cork-trees—may be found lonely hermitages filled with *ex votos*—little daubs, marvels of perspective and colouring, placed in the holy fane to commemorate the providential escapes from mortal injury of sportsmen whose weapons had gone off at the wrong end. Craving the pardon of my reader for having so unwarrantably strayed away from my subject, I will now return to the phylloxera.

For many years French journals of viticulture have teemed with advertisements of wondrous panaceas, warranted by the inventors or proprietors to utterly destroy the phylloxera. This multitude of nostrums was greatly increased by the reward of 300,000 francs offered by the Government in 1874, making, with the amounts offered by the departmental commissions and railway companies, the handsome total of nearly 600,000 francs, to be gained by the fortunate inventor 'of a process efficacious and economically applicable in the generality of soils to destroy the phylloxera, or to prevent its ravages.'

The Institut des Sciences and the different departmental commissions have been inundated for several years with innumerable specifics from all parts of the world. Practical men, scientists, schemers, quacks, people who had passed their lives in the wine-growing districts, others who perhaps had never even seen a vine-

yard, attracted by the hope of drawing the 'grand lot,' evolved out of their inward consciousness some scheme—practical or the reverse—for putting a stop to the ravages of the wondrous little insect. The larger proportion of these projects were at once dismissed by the committees as utterly absurd. Indeed, I am assured that some of those who were eager to have their theories submitted to the ordeal of a practical trial were evidently under the impression that the phylloxera and the oidium Tuckeri were one and the same thing. It need hardly be said that those few processes offering any chance of success are the outcome of years of practical experience, of patient observation, and careful study on the part of earnest men, who have devoted all their time and energies to the attempt to solve the complex problem. These 'selected processes,' whose partial success in practice has to a certain extent raised the drooping spirits of the viticulturers, may be classed as follows—the application of sand, submersion of the vines, some half-dozen chemical processes, and the importation of American vines.

As I have already mentioned, the phylloxera aptère kill the vines by riddling the roots with minute holes and absorbing the sap, so that the vines, deprived of nourishment, fade and die. Upon finding that a plant is used up, the insects, 'cute little Yankees as they are, pack up their trunks and move on 'to fresh fields and pastures new.' In other words, they then attack the healthy vines nearest at hand. These they reach by working their way through the soil, or sometimes, as it is proved, by ascending to the surface, and crawling along until they come to crevices which enable them

to descend and attack healthy roots.

However, there is but little doubt that the more usual manner in which the phylloxera aptère spread is *under* the soil. When, as is nearly always the case in the southern departments, there are broad spaces between each rank of vines, where olive-trees and often corn flourish, the disease quickly runs up the whole length of a file, but takes a much longer time to pass from one rank to the other. Experience has proved that vines planted in a very fine sandy soil are rarely attacked by the phylloxera. It is supposed that the insect cannot freely circulate about the roots or find any crevices under the soil to journey from one vine to another. The knowledge of this fact induced MM. Lichtenstein and Espitalier to propose that in menaced vineyards trenches should be made round the roots, and filled up with sand. This plan was tried on a large scale in the Carmargue by Monsieur Espitalier with success. It was also tried near Montpellier with the same result. Unless, however, the vineyard is situated near the sand, the cost of transport becomes immense, and therefore this process is practical in but few instances.

The system of submersion was originated in France by a M. Faucon of Graveson (a little village near Avignon, close to the Canal de Durance), whose vineyard is about twenty hectares (say forty acres) in extent, and planted with Alicante, d'Aramon, and Benaden vines.

The submersion is usually made in October, after the vintage, and the vines are kept under water for forty days. After this they are well manured. How satisfactory the effect of the above treatment has been may be

gathered from the following table prepared by M. Faucon himself:

<i>Récolte</i>	<i>Hectolitres</i>
En 1867, année avant l'invasion du phylloxera	925
En 1868, première année de l'invasion, vignes fumées, non submergées	40
En 1869, deuxième année de l'invasion, vignes fumées, non submergées	85
En 1870, première année de la submersion sans engrais	120
En 1871, deuxième année de la submersion sans engrais	450
En 1872, troisième année de la submersion avec engrais	849
En 1873, quatrième année de la submersion avec engrais	725
En 1874, cinquième année de la submersion avec engrais	1250
En 1875, sixième année de la submersion avec engrais	2600

In 1876 the vintage was not so large, in consequence of the severe frost during the month of April of that year; but the vines were very healthy. Here and there might still be seen a spot in which the phylloxera still linger. The 'resurrection' of this vineyard is the more marvellous, from the fact that it is situated in the centre of a district where the phylloxera has caused fearful ravages.

M. Faucon has been public-spirited enough to endeavour, by every means in his power, to benefit his brother vignerons, by spreading the knowledge of the most satisfactory result of his perspicacity and enterprise. A great number of wine-growers, whose vineyards are situated on low-lying ground near streams or canals, have since tried submersion with considerable success. Unfortunately the majority of vineyards, and, as a rule, the most valuable ones, are planted on steep hillsides. To quote the words of Francois de Neufchâteau:

'Sur la colline, au soleil étendue,
La vigne à ses appuis doit monter, suspendue
Par sa riche verdure au bout de longs guérets,
Bacchas termine au loin l'horizon de Cérés.'

M. Faucon will have rendered an inestimable service to his native south if the success of his experiment has for sole result the speedy construction of the projected 'Canal Dumont,' which, fed by the Rhone at Condrieu, will fertilise portions of the Drome, the Vaucluse, the Gard, and the Hérault, altogether a tract of nearly 140,000 acres, where the phylloxera is now making fearful ravages. Before the appearance of the disease the taxes on the wines of this district realised nearly 15,000,000 francs; this total has now dropped to less than half. Such facts speak volumes.

'When doctors disagree then 'twere folly to be wise,' is an adage which may be very aptly used when trying to form an impartial opinion on the question of the value of chemical preparations for the destruction of the phylloxera. No subject connected with the ravages of this insect has given rise to more bitter controversies, such diametrically opposed statements. As to the *number* of the different specifics 'warranted by the inventors to extirpate the phylloxera,' their name is legion; and the cry is 'Yet they come.' As far back as 1872 the Commission established at Montpellier carefully tried the chemical compounds of no less than 136 different inventors' preparations. 'Le sel, le soufre, le plâtre, la suie, les cendres, l'acide phénique, huile de cade, eaux ammoniacales de gaz, sels d'arsenic, de cuivre; polysulfures alcalins, le phosphore gazeux d'hydrogène, les vapeurs de sulfure, de carbone, de benzine, de pétrole, de diverses essences volatiles, d'éther, de chloroforme, d'alcool, et décoctions variées,' figure on the imposing list; yet after a course of most careful experiments, lasting over a year, the President

of the Commission reported of the result as follows: 'Numerous examinations of the plants have shown that no process has completely destroyed the phylloxera; and it was only by comparing the condition of the vines experimented upon with those left as witnesses around them that it was possible to judge of the relative values of the different processes.' Again, as recently as 1877, in 'Rapport adressé au Conseil Général de la Gironde, par deux de ces Membres, sur la Question de la Maladie de la Vigne,' we find as follows: 'Jusqu'ici les insecticides dirigés contre le phylloxera souterrain ont produits des résultats peu satisfaisants: on ne peut les recommander qu'à titres d'expériences à continuer; dans le Midi leur emploi est généralement abandonné.' This last statement the writer can indorse from experience.

In spite of these sweeping condemnations many instances can be cited where chemical compounds have achieved a decided success—notably the sulfure de carbone and the sulfo-carbonate de potassium. The former preparation was first used by M. le Baron Thénard, who tried it in 1869 on some vines near Bordeaux. However, the doses he applied were too strong; for, although the insects were destroyed, the sulfo proved fatal to the vines. In 1873 M. Monestier, of Montpellier, revived Baron Thénard's idea; and the brilliant success of his first experiments was so complete, that the 'question phylloxera' appeared solved; but after several trials made by the Société d'Agriculture de l'Hérault in various soils it was unfortunately found that quantities of the insects had escaped the action of the insecticide. Since the date of the above experiments great improve-

ments have been made in the application of the sulfure de carbone, by which it has become much more efficacious. The Compagnie du Chemin de Fer de Paris, Lyon, and la Méditerranée has most energetically supported the sulfure de carbone. By means of its committee at Marseilles the company has distributed no less than 13,000 barrels (each barrel containing 100 kilogrammes) of the insecticide to 370 vineyard proprietors owning 400 vineyards, some of which are 80 acres in extent, and situated in every possible variation of soil and climate. As a rule the effects of the treatment have been very encouraging. Monsieur Catta (one of the committee) states that, 'speaking approximately, it can be asserted that those vineyards suffering from the phylloxera which have undergone one application of the sulfo de carbone appeared in a very favourable condition when compared with those vines which have been left to themselves, although before the treatment they had been all in the same enfeebled state. That those vines which had been treated with the sulfo de carbone before the disease had materially enfeebled them were now in as flourishing a condition as if they had never been attacked by the phylloxera.' He also states that, when an infected vineyard receives an application of the sulfure de carbone, a considerable diminution, if not the total disappearance, of the disease is the result. The average cost of the application of this remedy is estimated by M. Catta at 125 francs per hectare, of which twenty-five francs is allowed for labour; the latter amount appears to me as much too small. A friend of mine in the Var has recently tried the sulfure de carbone, using the flacons renverses de Fouqué; in

this case, although the wages are there, if anything, below the average of wine-growing districts, the cost for labour was thirty francs per hectare, and unfortunately the result has not been encouraging. M. Rommier, who prepared an analysis of M. Catta's report for the Congrès Phylloxérique International de Lausanne, also considers the estimate for labour as too small. According to his experience the cost for labour is at least forty francs per hectare. In 1873 the departmental commission of the Saône et Loire treated a vineyard at Mancey with sulfo de carbone; the quantity used was 170 kilogrammes per hectare, at a total cost of 127 francs,—86 francs for the insecticide, 41 francs for labour. The result was considered satisfactory, as nearly all the phylloxeras had been destroyed; it was nevertheless found necessary to renew the treatment three times during the summer, by which means the disease appears to have been totally stamped out for a time, but at an enormous expense. The Baron de Thénard, who it has already been mentioned was the first to try the sulfo de carbone, is of opinion that in order to insure perfect success the vineyards must undergo treatment for at least six years in succession.

The sulfure de carbone, although, as we have seen, a most excellent specific, has one serious disadvantage. It is simply and purely an insecticide. That is to say, it may kill the phylloxera, but it plays no part as a fertiliser in reviving the exhausted vines.

In 1874 a preparation designed to attain *both* the above necessary objects was brought forward by a M. Dumas, the able head of the 'Commission de l'Académie des Sciences.' This preparation is the famous sulfo-carbonate de potas-

sium, which is, to quote the words of M. Dumas, 'un insecticide par dégagement de sulfure de carbone fertilisante grâce à la présence de la potasse.' Tried at Cognac in 1874, the results were considered so satisfactory that in 1877 experiments were made on a much more extended scale by 'l'Ecole d'Agriculture' at Montpellier. Owing probably to the very bad state of the vineyard the treatment was to a certain extent a failure. Since that date the sulfo-carbonate de potassium has been very successful in the Bordeaux and Cognac districts.

Although one cannot but regard as at least premature the sanguine utterances of M. Cauvy, 'Professeur à l'Ecole supérieure de Pharmacie de Montpellier; Membre honoraire de la Société d'Agriculture de l'Hérault,' &c., who affirms that the knowledge of insecticides has now arrived at such a state 'qu'elles nous permettront de démontrer que nous sommes aujourd'hui en possession de moyens pratiques, à l'aide desquels il nous sera possible, quand on voudra les appliquer, de débarrasser de leurs parasites souterrains nos vignes vieilles, de préserver des ravages du phylloxera nos jeunes vignes replantées en plants de pays,' yet, upon reviewing the results of the different experiments made throughout the different wine-growing districts, it can be clearly observed that the knowledge of chemical remedies has made great strides during the last few years, and that there is every reason to hope that the progress already made will eventually lead to success as far as the possibility of destroying the insect is concerned. Unfortunately there always remains the important question whether the cost of application will not practically debar all but the proprietors of the most valu-

able growths availing themselves of its aid.

It must be borne in mind that although government or departmental commissions may succeed, by means of an enormous outlay, in completely vanquishing the phylloxera upon the chosen battlefield of experimental vineyards, there yet remains a vast difference between these, what may be termed, 'theoretical demonstrations' and *practical* results on a large scale. It may answer the purpose of the rich proprietors of the Bordeaux and Burgundy districts to expend enormous sums, in the hope of combating the tide of an invasion which threatens to utterly overwhelm those renowned vineyards whose names are household words throughout the civilised world, and it is even possible they may succeed in the struggle; but the position of wealthy capitalists is a far different one to that of the vast majority of vignerons, whose wines are hardly worth as many shillings as are those of their wealthier brethren worth pounds. To be within the reach of *their* resources the remedy must be *economical* as well as *efficacious*.

The 'London correspondent' of a flourishing provincial daily journal was, within the last few weeks, kind enough to vouchsafe to his yokel readers the following startling piece of news:

'Phylloxera! May I whisper it? the dreadful pest is spreading fast, and has reached the Bordeaux district at last. Now, here comes the matter I want to mention. A French gentleman living in London has discovered a means of killing the insect, by grafting in the vines some kind of plant, and he proposes to offer the scheme to the French wine-growers. If his plan does not succeed, claret will soon be as dear as the best Madeira. The

vines are fast going.' As the phylloxera had unfortunately reached the Bordeaux districts ten years ago, the 'London correspondent' can be hardly congratulated upon his 'early intelligence.'

After reading such a paragraph one is irresistibly reminded of the old quip as to the news of the decease of good Queen Anne, or of the conquest of Holland by the Dutch. It is to be hoped, for the sake of the enlightened correspondent, that this future regenerator of French vines, this coming benefactor of all wine-growing nations, has not induced him to advance any considerable sum on the security of the anticipated prize of 600,000 francs. The 'French gentleman' appears to have got hold of a curiously muddled-up and inverted idea of a process for nullifying the effects of the phylloxera, which has long been known and practised in France—the introduction of American vines. The knowledge of the fact that in America (the native land of the phylloxera) many species of indigenous vines flourish, even when their roots are covered by myriads of phylloxeras, doubtless inspired M. Laliman of Bordeaux to propose at the Congrès des Agriculteurs, held at Beaune in 1869, that the vineyards destroyed by the phylloxera should be replanted with American vines. The experiment was first tried on a large scale by M. Fabre of Fournel, Hérault.

The success of this and numerous other trials of the resisting properties of the American vines induced many high authorities not only to encourage their importation, but the Commission de l'Académie des Sciences sent the eminent M. Planchon over to the United States to find out the vines most suitable for importa-

tion. A member of the Phylloxera Commission appointed by the Ancien Chambre des Députés went so far as to declare the American vines 'a means sent by God to permit the reconstitution of those beautiful vineyards which were the pride and wealth of France.' Notwithstanding the support afforded to this project by so many eminent authorities, it has met with the most determined opposition on the part, as a rule, of those believers in the efficacy of the means of repression or extinction afforded by the many chemical processes. 'What folly,' urge they, 'to encourage the importation of American plants now that the French vines are commencing to derive benefit from their treatment! The American vines will simply supply fresh legions to replace those destroyed by the viticulteurs. O, profanation!' they exclaim; 'are the glorious productions of the sun of France to be sacrificed for frightful beverages, of which the odour of the black currant and the fox are the dominant perfumes?' 'Les barbares sont aux portes de Bercy, et les malheureux Parisiens, condamnés à l'intoxication lente par la fuchsine, vont l'être par surcroît à l'empoisonnement immédiat par le gros bleu ou la piquette transatlantique.' But, as M. Planchon, in his *Vignes Américaines* (written soon after his return from the United States), is careful to observe, 'It is not a question of sacrificing for foreign vines those plants which maintain the reputation of our country of "grand vins." The idea is more to strengthen the indigenous plants by engrafting them on American vines; and if,' he adds, 'by thus having "des nourrices étrangères et robustes et résistantes," they will be enabled to preserve all their

natural qualities, which nothing can improve, one may thing himself happy to have saved at such a price one of the riches and, it can be termed, the glories of our national agriculture.'

Experience has shown that the French vines engrafted on American stems are not only enabled to resist to a great extent the attacks of the phylloxera, but that their grapes retain all their original flavour and bouquet. This fact considerably enhances the value of the American plants, as it was at one time supposed that they would transmit to the bearing vines engrafted into them at least some portion of their objectionable qualities.

It has never been proposed by even the most ardent supporters of the American vines that they should be introduced into those districts which up to the present the phylloxera has not reached. To do so would be both unnecessary and foolish. The untouched departments should jealously guard their frontiers from the American vines, lest they may infect them with the dreaded malady. It is only the districts whose vineyards are devastated which have need to invoke their aid. But, to quote worthy Sancho Panza, 'No hay placer sin heil'—there is no joy without some drawback—and when the unhappy vigneron of the south see their vines destroyed, their soil teeming with myriads of phylloxeras, the question whether the American plants may import fresh reinforcements to these countless hosts is a matter of comparative indifference, if by the aid of the robust plants they may be enabled to defy the attacks of the insects. In truth, the adoption of American plants appears the only means offering to the vigneron of the south to restore their devastated vineyards.

How thoroughly they are appreciated may be gathered from the fact that good American shoots (*ceps*) sell readily at a franc each.

Owing to a variety of causes, wealth, and above all landed property, is more equally distributed in France than in any other country. This, whilst undoubtedly an immense blessing to the French nation, and probably one of the secrets of its wondrous recuperative powers from seasons of unexampled calamity, is not without attendant disadvantages. A community of small proprietors renders almost impossible that united and intelligent action which is so essential to the success of any attempt to combat a formidable enemy like the phylloxera. The great majority of French vineyards are small in extent and cultivated by the owners, who as a class are honest industrious men, but narrow-minded and miserly. Of no education, they receive with scorn or suspicion the advice of scientific men; and it is almost an impossibility to induce them to expend their hardly-earned gains in taking precautionary measures. When, however, their vineyards are seriously attacked they give way to utter despair; whilst yet, with a curious inconsistency, clinging to the hope that some universal panacea will speedily appear. It is extremely improbable that any such specific will ever be discovered. So varied are the conditions of climate, soil, and culture in the French wine-growing districts that each appears to require a distinct method of treatment: a remedy completely successful in one locality may prove almost useless in another, offering special obstacles to its effect.

Instead of supinely awaiting some universal remedy that shall make the phylloxera as rare as the dodo or as harmless as the

dove, the French vigneron would be far wiser to unite in vigorous attempts to make the best use of the series of specifics, each adapted to the culture and economy of individual districts, already discovered. As tritely observes M. Planchon, 'The means may differ, but the goal is the same, and one well worthy the trouble of striving to reach in different directions;' and let us hope, by the aid of submersion, the application of sand, the different insecticides, and last, but not least, the American vines, the

sorely-tried vigneron may see ere long their now devastated vineyards restored to their pristine luxuriance, and again, as of old, *récolte l'or dans les flots de vin*.

' Cette liqueur douce et vermeille,
Qui dans ses grains encore est pendue à la
treille
Dans la cuve, bientôt nous la verrons couler;
Nous en boirons à tasse pleine;
Nos corps en reprendront une vigueur
soudaine,
Et libres des soucis qui nous peuvent
troubler,
Chantant le Dieu qui nous la donne,
Nous attendrons une autre automne.'
W. B. RUDD.

THE TEMPLE FOUNTAIN.

THERE is a fount that from no source
To Naiad sacred wells;
It laves no sands, it hath no course
Down rocks through fairy dells;
But, gushing from a pipe of lead,
Fixed by a mortal mason,
It throws its plashing spray o'erhead
To fill a marble basin.

Who knows it not, whose feet have passed
The sober precincts, where
Within the city, stern and vast,
There blooms one bright parterre,
That typifies—walled in apart,
Where yet oft heard the thrush is—
That human fragment in the heart,
Which not e'en greed quite crushes?

There, mirroring no clouds that pass
Serene o'er mountain towers,
And circled by no stretch of grass,
Fragrant with honeyed flowers;
But, pent within a narrow court,
And by hard stone-flags bordered,
Its modest waters rest or sport,
As by the turntap ordered.

Yet, reader, in thy heart, if aught
Of tender fancy lies,
Thou'lt praise with me the hands that taught
This fountain here to rise—
To mingle with the roar of strife,
And struggles hard and real,
Some murmurs of that other life,
That's still our fond Ideal.

For mark the faces passing by,
 How something from them drops
 Of gloom or pain, as, drawing nigh,
 Each one unconscious stops,
 And marks the ripple, and the spray
 That rushes upward, sparkling
 A moment in the light of day,
 Then in its bed lies darkling.

What is it that they hear or see?
 Is it the splash of seas
 In far-off bays? Or can it be
 That, borne upon the breeze,
 They catch a momentary sound
 Of pleasant inland fountains
 In other days they played around,
 Among their native mountains?

But who is this, at close of day,
 That in the shadow stands?
 A maiden, clad in sober gray,
 A basket in her hands.
 O say, can this be 'sister Ruth'?
 It is, as I'm a sinner!
 And in that reticule, in sooth,
 Lies poor Tom Pinch's dinner.

And here *he* comes—just as he came
 I' the story fresh, though old;
 The same, or, if not quite the same,
 One of the self-same mould;
 For in their haunts you yet may meet
 Descendants of the Pinches,
 To their brave sire, could you but see't,
 As like as finch to finch is.

Joy beckons them through quiet ways
 By other eyes unseen;
 And in their hearts a fountain plays
 For ever, keeping green
 The youth that in us too soon dies,
 Scorched by some fiery passion,
 Or frittered by the vanities
 Of folly or of fashion.

Peace be with them! Peace, too, and cheer
 Unto the souls of those
 Who planned within their stony sphere
 These waters to enclose.
 'Good Templars,' in the Master's time,
 May they find pleasant chambers,
 By fairer founts, in courts sublime,
 Enrolled immortal members!

HID IN A TURF-RICK.

An Irish Episode.

BY T. PRESTON BATTERSBY, LIEUTENANT ROYAL ARTILLERY.

‘THE Irish are a fine race!’

‘That’s your opinion, is it?’

The speakers were myself and Ellerslie, captain in the Royal Engineers, or the ‘Sappers,’ as we called them in popular phraseology. Place, the smoking-room of the R.A. mess at Woolwich. Time, anywhere in the small hours. When I say that of the above sentences the first was spoken by me, I shall be in position to plunge at once *in medias res*.

After uttering the above oracular answer, Ellerslie puffed away silently at his long havannah for a while. I did not interrupt him, for I saw a twinkle in his eye, and knew that there was something coming presently. He was one of those men whose thoughts it is not well to hurry, for fear of losing their thread altogether.

At last it came, as I anticipated.

‘I don’t think I ever told you, did I, of my adventures in that lovely country? In fact, the story is so much against myself, that I thought it just as well to keep it dark. However, if you will swear solemnly to be “silent as the grave,” I don’t mind telling you now. At all events, it is not a bad joke as it turned out, though it might have been a serious one.’

Of course I promised inviolable secrecy, however good the story might be, and having fortified himself with a brandy-and-soda, Ellerslie began:

‘I daresay you know that in the spring of 187- I was sent to Ireland on special service to see

about building new barracks in two or three places where they were needed, especially at Longford, where the Government had at that time an idea of quartering a whole cavalry regiment, though now I believe they have come down to one troop of Scots Grays. I was rather pleased with the commission, for I had never been to the Emerald Isle before, and saw my way to a pleasant little excursion at Government expense. Of course as all my disbursements *en route* were to be paid for me by the liberality of my country, I chose the most convenient way of getting to my destination, and travelled, *via* Euston and Holyhead, by the night-mail, the Wild Irishman, I believe they call it.

‘We left Euston at 8.25 P.M. I didn’t feel much inclined to sleep, and you know I am a great smoker, so I turned into a compartment sacred to the consumption of the soothing weed. There was only one other occupant besides myself, a man of about forty, well dressed, but not to my mind a gentleman. Indeed, at first sight I put him down to be what he was, a well-to-do Irish farmer returning from a business trip to town, and indulging himself in the unwonted luxury of a first-class carriage.

‘Whatever other faults those Irish have, they are certainly a most friendly race. By the time we got to Rugby I had told my fellow-traveller all about my projected plans for seeing his native

country, and found that he rejoiced in the name of Cormack, and lived in the county Westmeath, not far from the Longford boundary. Before we reached Chester we were sworn friends, and by the time we arrived at Holyhead I had promised to pay him a visit during my stay in his part of the country. This visit it was which gave me such a taste of Irish customs as I could very well have dispensed with.

'Not to delay too long, I shall pass over all the incidents of my first fortnight or so in the Emerald Isle, they being no doubt exactly what any one else would have experienced under like circumstances. At length I reached Longford, got through my work there, and determined to call on my new-made friend, for which purpose I took train to a little station called Edgeworthstown, and there obtained an outside car with a lean horse and a very ragged driver, who undertook for the sum of eighteenpence per double mile (Irish) to convey me to my destination. As to the name of the said destination, I dare not venture on it. It began with the usual "Bally," ended, I think, with a "y," and had I fancy about four syllables between, of a nature utterly unpronounceable to English lips. Suffice to say that we got there at length, and pulled up at the door of a very respectable slated farmhouse, with thatched outbuildings and a well-kept grass-field, on which two or three colts were feeding, of a slimness of limb and beauty of make that proclaimed their owner a racing man.

'The said owner met me at the door with an effusive welcome, and asked me into a well-furnished parlour, the taste of whose ornaments contrasted favourably with what I should have expected in the house of an English farmer of

the same rank. Presently the mistress of the house and a pretty fresh-looking daughter entered and shook hands with me with native politeness. I expressed a wish to see the farm, and Cormack readily offered to show it to me, first, however, saying a few words in a low tone to his wife, who went out of the room. A moment after I heard wheels driving away outside.

"Only the car, yer honour," said Cormack, in answer to my look of inquiry, "I made free to send it away for ye; it's with us ye'll be stopping now, plase God."

'It was true enough. My faithless Jehu having been paid in advance by me had been only too ready to depart, and, unless I chose to walk back to Edgeworthstown, which I did not feel inclined to do, I was to all intents and purposes a fixture. At first I was inclined to be annoyed, but the exquisite naïveness of the whole proceeding amused me, and I was really flattered by the solicitude of my would-be host; so, after a few half remonstrances, I was induced to write a telegram for my baggage, which Cormack confided to a young imp who appeared to be doing odd jobs about the place, bidding him "run over to the post-office and give it to Mister Moran himself, and tell him it's immadiate."

'I stayed some little time at the Cormacks' seeing the country in company with my host, and forming my ideas of Irish political economy as it is, and as it should be, which being rather a hobby of mine I won't now trouble you with. There was a gentleman's family living in the neighbourhood, which I soon made the acquaintance of, as in that out-of-the-way locality the arrival of a stranger was as great an event as that of a foreign potentate in

London. Several afternoons I spent pleasantly at "the big house," playing lawn-tennis with the young ladies of the place, whom I found to be far more proficient in the art than their English sisters, probably from the solitude of their country life having obliged them to concentrate their energies on that particular form of amusement.

'One day that I had been spending in the above manner, and on which I had accepted a kind invitation to dinner *en famille*, I noticed that Mr. M—— seemed more absent than usual, and a trifle quick-tempered, as though he had been annoyed by something or somebody. When the ladies had left us, and we were sitting over the usual post-prandial bottle of wine, he took a letter from his pocket and showed it to me.

"That's the kind of thing we have to put up with here, Mr. Ellerslie," said he. "You mustn't go away with your ideas of the country too much *couleur de rose*."

'That was in truth a strange production. It was written, or rather laboriously printed, on a sheet of coarse paper, headed by a rough but spirited drawing of coffins and bell-mouthed blunderbusses. Below was the following composition, of which I made a copy out of curiosity :

"M.M. DONT . GO . TO . MOTE . OR .
I . WL . B . YOOR . END . FET . IT .
B . RIT . OR . WRONG . FET . PVT .
HIGGINS . STVY . AT . OME ."*

'I looked at my host for an explanation.

"It is a threatening letter," said he, "and not the first either that I have received. The print-

* Translation: 'M—— M——, don't go to Moate, or I will be your end. Let it be right or wrong, let Pat Higgins stay at home.' The above is an exact copy of a threatening letter in the author's possession.

ing is easy enough to read on the phonographic principle, with the caution that most of the A's and L's are upside down. The meaning is, that one of my tenants having against my express orders ploughed up a grass field, I have given him notice to quit, and went into Moate yesterday to consult my attorney as to what compensation I was obliged to pay under the Irish Land Act. I got this the day before. I am not personally much afraid of the fellows, but it is very annoying ; and I am always on thorns lest one of those letters should reach my wife ; it would almost frighten her to death, I fancy."

"You met with no interruption going into Moate, I suppose?" said I.

"No ; but I took my precautions. I got a policeman on my car and drove in by a roundabout route. It isn't a pleasant way of doing things, is it?"

'I quite agreed with Mr. M. that it was not, and expressed my surprise that the author of the letter could not be brought to justice.

"You don't know the Irish, Mr. Ellerslie ; there is not a soul about here who would not swear black was white rather than be the means of convicting a neighbour. You know yourself how completely the police system failed over so daring an offence as the murder of the late Lord Leitrim. With such people as witnesses and jury, what is to be done? For my own part I have no doubt that Mr. Pat Higgins himself wrote that letter, but hunting up any evidence would be hopeless."

'A sudden thought struck me. I had seen that the last few words of the document were lighter in colour, as if they had been blotted. If so, would there not remain an impression on the blotting-paper?

'I don't know what evil spirit

took possession of me at this juncture, unless—I own it with contrition—it were that of inordinate self-conceit. Should I be able to get enough evidence to convict Pat Higgins myself, I should certainly derive much credit for my sagacity, and have an excellent story for my friends in England on my return. With this end in view I said nothing of my happy thought, determined to work it out myself.

‘Next morning, having found out the locality of Higgins’s cottage from Cormack, I went to make a call there. The sole occupant of the tenement when I arrived there was a wrinkled old woman sitting on a three-legged stool and smoking a black clay-pipe. She looked at me suspiciously, but her native hospitality forbade her to refuse me a seat. For the first time I felt some qualms of conscience at the character of my errand, but these were speedily dissipated by the sight, in a corner of the large open hearth, of the very thing I was seeking, a piece of dirty blotting-paper crumpled up into a ball. To be sure the floor had not been swept for years, judging from its appearance, and there was no telling how long the paper might have lain there, still I felt a conviction that it was the object of my search.

‘The devices to which I resorted to get possession of that mute piece of evidence were worthy of a detective policeman. I manoeuvred my chair closer to it under pretence of feeling a draught, though with the unpleasant consciousness that the old woman did not believe me. Fortune, however, favoured me at last in the shape of a fierce contest between an old sow and a dog just outside the door, which made the crone hobble out briskly to separate the combatants. She was not gone

long, but I had plenty of time during her absence to secrete the paper. As soon as I decently could afterwards I took my leave.

‘The moment I was out of sight of the door I opened my prize and found it to be what I hoped, a fairly good inverted copy of the threatening letter. Of course the last words were the most distinct, but on the whole it was a very pretty piece of *prima facie* evidence against Mr. Pat Higgins. I presented the paper to Mr. M., who praised my sagacity and thanked me warmly for my exertions on his behalf. That same evening I made a deposition before a magistrate who lived near by, and, much to his surprise, Higgins was arrested.

‘Now I come to the unlucky portion of my story. How my share in the foregoing proceedings got about I don’t know; but a day or two after this I found a great change in Cormack’s manner towards me. Hitherto he had been hospitality itself; now he seemed anxious to get me to leave his house, though he was as studiously polite in hiding his wishes as the most finished gentleman could have been. Of course, however, I could not stay longer with a man who was tired of me, and I signified to him accordingly my intention of leaving him. He appeared to me somewhat relieved by the news.

‘I dined at Mr. M.’s the night before my departure, after a farewell game of tennis with the ladies, and did not leave the house till nearly dusk. As I was walking back to Cormack’s I noticed footsteps behind me, and, looking round, saw that I was followed by a small body of men all armed with sticks. Not wishing them to come up with me I quickened my pace a little. They did the

same, and closed on me somewhat.

‘I had to pass a sharp turn on the road. Just as I neared the hedge, and for the moment lost sight of my followers, I saw a woman on the other side close to me. Leaning forward, she said eagerly, “Run for yer life, sir; it’s you they’re after.” Before I could reply she had sunk down behind the hedge again as my pursuers came in sight.

‘I hope if ever there be any chance of holding my own that I shall not be found ready to run away; but when followed by a dozen men with sticks it is about the only thing that can be done, so I trust I may be pardoned for taking to my heels.

‘The men instantly followed at full speed, and for a time the pace was hot. But, having still my tennis-shoes on, and being naturally swift of foot, I soon distanced them, and they were a good half mile behind when I reached Cormack’s door.

‘Cormack himself was standing on the threshold. At one glance he took in the situation, having probably had some previous information as to what was going to happen. With a muttered oath he seized me by the arm and hurried me through the house and into the yard at the back. There was a rick of turf there which had that day been opened, leaving a small aperture in the smooth continuity of its rows.

“Get in there, sir,” said Cormack, “and you, Pat” (addressing his son who was working in the yard when we entered) “build up the clamp again while I go and lock the door. An’ if ye tell the boys where the gentleman is ye’re no son of mine.”

‘The case was not one which admitted of parleying. I got into the rick, and Pat built up the

outside turf with marvellous celerity. There was room enough for air and sound to enter through the interstices between the sods, but the dust nearly choked me. However, I was glad enough of even that refuge when I heard the storm of curses that broke from my pursuers, as, having at length burst open the door, they poured into the yard.

“So help me God!” I could hear Cormack saying, “I let him out at the back-door, boys. Was I to let the gentleman be murdered in me own house an’ he staying there?”

‘Curiously enough, as I thought, the angry men admitted the plea, but all now turned upon Pat to know which way I had gone. He, being no better than most of his countrymen in the matter of truthfulness, gave them most minute directions as to the route I had taken, and, after a hurried search of the house and yard, they started off in pursuit.

‘When they were out of sight Pat unpacked me. By this time I was almost fainting from the suffocating dust and smell of the turf, and I was glad to sit down in the kitchen and have a draught of buttermilk. Meanwhile Cormack had saddled one of his horses and brought it round to the door.

“Get up on that horse, sir,” said he, “and ride as hard as ye can to the police-station at Bally——; it’s the only place ye’ll be safe in after this. I’ll send on yer luggage there for ye. I’ve saved ye this day because ye were stopping in me own house, but only for that I wouldn’t have put out a finger to help ye for an English informer as ye are. So there’s no thanks due to me.”

‘I attempted a few words of explanation and gratitude, but I confessed feeling decidedly “small”

as I rode away, and inwardly took a vow never to interfere with other people's business again.

'I sent my late host a cheque afterwards for what I considered a fair sum for my fortnight's board and lodgings, with a letter expressing my sense of obligation to him and my wish to have made him a present to remember me by did I not fear to offend him. The cheque was returned without a word.

'I was obliged to attend at the trial of Pat Higgins, who, rather to my satisfaction, was triumphantly acquitted by a jury of his compatriots, so that all my trouble and danger had been incurred

for nothing. After that you won't wonder that I am not very proud of the story, and don't want it to go beyond you.'

'Who was the woman who warned you?' asked I; 'did you ever find out?'

'She was Cormack's daughter, and was engaged to Pat Higgins as I found out afterwards,' answered Ellerslie. 'After that I think you will agree with me that the Irish are a peculiar race.'

'Shall I tell you what I think was the most peculiar thing in the whole story?' said I.

'Well?'

'Sending back your cheque!'

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

XIII.

THE LOW MOOR COMPANY.

IN the year 1787 there died by his own hand a well-known Yorkshire squire named Edward Leeds, the last of an ancient line by whom the manors of North Bierley and Wibsey had been held from the early part of the sixteenth century. Squire Leeds was a member of the Rookes family, and lived at Royds Hall, a mansion which had been built by one of his ancestors in the reign of James I., and still exists, a fine example of the architecture of the period. Squire Leeds had changed his patronymic from Rookes to Leeds on intermarrying with the daughter and heiress of Robert Leeds of Milford; but neither the wealth that he inherited from his forefathers nor that which he acquired by marriage served to satisfy his extravagance. He was a *bon vivant*, like many other country squires who lived in 'the good old days' when 'George III. was king,' and loved his horses and his dogs and his boon companions much more than he loved to look after the development of the resources of his estate. So it came about that in the year 1787 he found himself hopelessly involved in debt, and was declared a bankrupt. His creditors seized upon his manors and lands and offered them for sale by public auction; and the squire and justice of the peace whose name had for many years been a power in the district felt unable to bear up against the disgrace which had

befallen him, and put an end to his existence.

The manors of North Bierley and Wibsey were of considerable extent, and comprised many acres of low-lying moorland. It was upon this moorland that what are now known as the Low Moor Iron-works were subsequently established. But it was not given to Squire Leeds or any of his family to have part or lot in the originating of these celebrated works. Unfortunately Squire Leeds was ignorant of the vastness of the mineral treasures which lay hidden away beneath the far-stretching fields and moorland which constituted his manorial demesne, otherwise he might not only have rescued himself from the disgrace of insolvency, but have become one of the wealthiest men in the county. The squire was aware that there was an abundance of coal upon his estate; for a colliery that he worked was for a long time the main source of his income, bringing him in little short of 1000*l.* a year. He had no conception, however, of the fact that embedded beneath his broad acres there was an almost inexhaustible supply of iron ore; but even had he been aware that such was the case he would probably have been lacking in the ability properly to utilise the mineral to its full advantage.

Be that as it may, the property passed beyond the control of

Squire Leeds, and was twice offered for sale by public auction—once in December 1786 and again in October 1787—but each time was bought in, a suitable price not being obtainable. In 1788, however, a company which already owned some coal mines in the district made a bid for the estate, and ultimately purchased it from Squire Leeds' assignees for the sum of 34,000*l.*, the sale being effected by private treaty.

The original partners in this the first Low Moor Company were Mr. Richard Hird, a country gentleman of good family, who resided at Rawdon, near Leeds, Mr. John Preston, and Mr. John Jarratt; but shortly afterwards a rearrangement of the partnership took place, and three new partners were taken into the firm. The three new partners were Mr. Joseph Dawson, a Nonconformist minister of Idle; Mr. John Hardy, a Bradford solicitor; and Mr. John Lofthouse, a Liverpool gentleman and probably a relative of Mr. Dawson. Mr. Lofthouse did not long remain connected with the firm, however, nor did Mr. Preston or Mr. Jarratt; and ultimately Messrs. Hird, Dawson, & Hardy became possessed of the entire property purchased from the assignees of Squire Leeds. It is now upwards of ninety years since the establishment of this firm of Hird, Dawson, & Hardy, and the representatives of the same three families, we believe, still comprise the entire proprietary of the Low Moor Company.

It was probably due more to the investigations and recommendations of Mr. Dawson than to anything else that the Low Moor enterprise was ventured upon. Mr. Dawson was an intimate friend of Dr. Priestley, and a man of high scientific attainments. He had given much attention to

metallurgy and chemistry, and had watched the progress of scientific discovery in regard to the working of iron with keen interest. He was a man of great vigour of mind and originality of character. In 1768 he had been ordained minister of Upper Chapel, Idle. He was then in his twenty-ninth year, and had just been married. His early years had been spent amidst struggle and trial. Born in very humble circumstances, he was led to make energetic efforts to educate himself, and attracted the notice of a gentleman, who generously took him by the hand and found the funds for the lad's educational training at the Daventry Academy. After leaving the academy, young Dawson was ambitious to prosecute his studies in a still higher sphere, and by the aid of a Nonconformist charity he was enabled to enter Glasgow University. Upon concluding his course of study at the University he was compelled to look around for an appointment, and there being a vacancy for a minister at Upper Chapel, Idle, he accepted it, the stipend being forty pounds a year. This, it must be allowed, was hardly sufficient even in those days to bring up a family upon with any degree of respectability, so Mr. Dawson set about devising some means of augmenting his income, and began a private school in the village. There is a tradition that his children were so badly off for clothes that they used to run about the lanes in tattered garments and barefooted, but that is a statement that probably requires to be taken *cum grano salis*, seeing that such stories exist with regard to most self-made personages. Of one thing we may be certain, he would not be overfastidious as to the cut of his children's costumes, and would be little affected by the affectations

of fashion, and perhaps the fact that his mind was superior to these outer details would cause his neighbours to exaggerate the humbleness of attire which would prevail in his family. Mr. Dawson did not make a successful minister; his mind was too much occupied in scientific speculation and in the promotion of his material prosperity. He established some coal mines on the hillside near his chapel, and worked them with profit. It was averred that his spiritual ministrations and his commercial engagements trenched so closely upon each other that he used frequently to be found paying his colliers their wages on the Sunday morning before service; after which he would slip into the little chapel and read to his handful of hearers a few pages from a sermon-book that had been previously placed in readiness in the pulpit. He was a farmer as well as a colliery proprietor and minister of the Gospel. His hens were penned in the chapel graveyard, and the fodder for his cattle was stowed away in a portion of the chapel itself. His duties and engagements were, indeed, of a multifarious character, and he was looked up to by the villagers for assistance and counsel in all kinds of difficulties. He was skilled in the profession of medicine, and was regularly called upon to prescribe for the benefit of his neighbours in times of sickness. It was no wonder that a man who had so many engagements apart from his ministry should find his congregation gradually dwindling. The Sunday attendance in the chapel was sometimes not more than half a dozen, and so matters went on until the Low Moor enterprise began to occupy his thoughts, when he relinquished his spiritual charge, and thence-

forth was to all intents and purposes a man of business.

The partnership proved in every way a successful one. From the wreck of Squire Leeds' fortune, Messrs. Hird, Dawson, & Hardy built up immense fortunes of their own—fortunes which placed their families in positions of affluence, and enabled their descendants to compete successfully for some of those offices of State and distinction which it is the highest ambition of an educated Englishman to fulfil. It would seem a singular partnership to begin with—the linking together of a Unitarian minister, a solicitor, and a country gentleman as iron-masters. But they were all men of great energy and perseverance, and the time was peculiarly favourable for the development of an enterprise of this nature. The heavy restrictions which the legislature had placed upon the manufacture of iron had recently been considerably relaxed, several important inventions having much simplified the smelting processes and rendered it practicable to use coal instead of charcoal for heating purposes. A few years before it had been reported to the House of Commons that 'if some care be not taken to preserve our timber from these consuming furnaces, there will not be oak enough left to supply the Royal Navy and our mercantile shipping.' It was little imagined that ere many years elapsed iron itself would supplant oak as a material for building our men-of-war. But the apprehension lest the iron manufacture should absorb our supplies of wood had been subdued by the perfecting of Dud Dudley's idea of substituting coal for charcoal in iron furnaces. In addition to this, remarkable inventions and improvements had been introduced in the art of making and working iron by Henry Cort

and others, and, aided by the application of Watt's 'fire-engines,' as steam-engines were first called, the iron trade began to assume an importance which it had never known before.

Messrs. Hird, Dawson, & Hardy were fully alive to the advantages of their position, and set to work in good earnest to turn their newly-acquired treasures of coal and ironstone to profitable account. The ironstone in the locality had been known to the Romans, these conquerors of our island having had forges and made iron there ages ago; but the full extent and value of the minerals underlying the Royds Hall estate could never have been suspected until Messrs. Hird, Dawson, & Hardy came to dig and burrow in search thereof. Both the coal and the ironstone proved to be of a very superior description. The 'better-bed' seam of coal rests upon a stratum of extremely hard sandstone termed 'galliard,' and is from eighteen to twenty-eight inches in thickness. A seam of 'black-bed' coal is met with some forty yards nearer the surface, and above, again, there comes the stratum wherein the iron-ore lies imbedded in irregular layers. This ironstone yields about thirty-two per cent of iron, and the metal in its finished state is 'remarkable for the peculiarity of its granular structure and uniform and brilliant grain,' and commands a much higher price than the ordinary run of iron. All the 'better-bed' coal upon the estate is exclusively reserved for making the Low Moor iron, the value of this now-celebrated brand of malleable iron depending in a great measure upon the superior character of the coal which is used. The Low Moor 'better-bed' coal is said to contain a smaller percentage of sulphur than almost any other coal.

The Royds Hall estate, as it came into the hands of Messrs. Hird, Dawson, & Hardy from the assignees of Squire Leeds, was of great extent, and was of exceedingly picturesque appearance. But the face of the landscape was soon changed when the smoke from the Low Moor furnaces began to fill the atmosphere, and when black pit-hills and long lines of tramways were to be seen on every side. Several other ironworks which have since expanded into concerns of great magnitude were established about the same time that the Low Moor Company began operations. At Bowling, only a mile or two away, an iron company was started in 1789, and from that time to this the Bowling Iron-works have been famous. Richard Crawshay, another Yorkshireman, had migrated to the neighbourhood of Merthyr Tydvil, and had begun those ironworks at Cyfartha which afterwards brought him fame and fortune. Indeed, the iron trade at that time presented the best possible field for the employment of capital, energy, and skill.

As time wore on fresh land was bought by the Low Moor Company, property after property was added, until the territorial possessions of Messrs. Hird, Dawson, & Hardy extended over many miles of country, their collieries being in some instances five or six miles distant from the ironworks. At the present time an immense network of tramways spreads on all sides round Low Moor, and represents a total length of not less than twenty-seven miles. Nine stationary steam-engines are employed in drawing the mineral wagons to and fro by means of wire-ropes, while from some of the pits the wagons have to be drawn by horses. The pits vary in depth

from 30 to 150 yards. Some 2000 persons are employed in the various mines, and in an ordinary year 60,000 tons of iron-ore will be yielded. There are about as many workpeople employed in the iron-works as in the collieries, which will bring up the total number to about 4000.

The history of the Low Moor Iron Company's enterprise is not a narrative of struggle and trial; the proprietors have experienced the ebbs and flows which are common to all industrial undertakings—they have had their seasons of slackness and depression and their seasons of extraordinary prosperity—but the general result of their endeavours has been a success that cannot but be regarded as remarkable when we come to consider how many persons have been raised to wealth by being connected with the firm of Hird, Dawson, & Hardy.

The first thing that the company did on obtaining possession of the Royds Hall estate was to erect a couple of blast furnaces on the common land at Low Moor. Mr. Smalley, an engineer from Wigan, was employed to superintend the putting up of the requisite steam-engine; and Mr. Thomas Woodcock, who also came from Wigan, where he had erected two blast furnaces for Lord Balcarres, undertook the erection of the furnaces. The two furnaces were 'blown in' on the 13th of August 1791, and three days later, on the 16th of August, the Low Moor forgemmen made their first 'casting.' From that time to this the Low Moor furnaces have been a prominent feature of the district; their number has increased largely, and night and day their fitful flames are to be seen for miles round, leaping and shining weirdly amidst a dense atmosphere of smoke, and

the clangour of mighty hammers and the roar of giant furnaces resound with their eternal reverberations through all the surrounding country.

As the years advanced, improvement after improvement was added to the works, and the establishment extended in all directions. Ere the second decade of the present century had passed away, the Low Moor Iron-works had become one of the largest and best known concerns in the North of England, and the partners constituting the firm had grown to be persons of high social position and importance. Reporters tell the story that on a certain occasion one of these same partners was examined before a Committee of the House of Commons, and that his statement, delivered in bluff homely Yorkshire style, that he was 'a partner in the Low Moor Works,' was taken down and printed in the following morning's newspaper as 'a pauper in the Low Moor workhouse,' to the no small consternation of the gentleman chiefly concerned.

All the partners employed themselves actively in carrying forward their business project. Mr. Dawson took up his abode in Royds Hall, the old manor-house of the lords of North Bierley, and from its mullioned windows looked out upon a scene far different from that which the former owners had looked upon from the same place. Here, Mr. Dawson continued his scientific researches and philosophical communings; and here he and his children used to keep treasured up the apparatus with which Dr. Priestley made his notable experiments in regard to the nature of gases. Mr. Dawson was greatly respected by the workpeople and inhabitants; he was not only diligent in superintending the business, but employed

himself largely in promoting the social and moral welfare of those around him. He and his family used to proceed every Sunday to the Unitarian chapel at Bradford, with which place of worship he was connected from the time of his taking up his residence at Royds Hall to the period of his death in 1813. Frequently he was prevailed upon to occupy the pulpit there, and was always listened to with marked respect, his style of address being simple, sincere, and fervent. The esteem in which he was held is sufficiently shown by the somewhat stilted panegyric which was subsequently inscribed to his memory upon a marble tablet erected in the before-mentioned chapel. There is a true Johnsonian ring about the composition. It runs thus :

‘Joseph Dawson, of Royds Hall, born the 12th May 1740 ; married, the 3d February 1768, to Rachel Lofthouse, by whom he had two sons and four daughters ; died 11th December 1813, aged 73 years. Surrounded in his early days by many difficulties ; without property, expectation, guide, or connections ; he received from the beneficence of some discerning individuals, an academical education. The road to science thus opened by generosity he pursued with success ; happily applied to practical purposes information resulting from study, and gradually added to extensive knowledge, reputation and affluence. But of wealth or worldly advancement he was not solicitous. In the esteem of friends, acquired by the constant performance of kind offices ; in the cheerful flow of affection in his family, excited by an uniform tenderness of deportment, in philosophical researches, and the habitual contemplation of the wonderful works of God, his calm and contented

mind sought its highest gratification. Taught by experience as well as meditation the high importance of just moral views, his strongest desire was to extend the pure principles of the Christian religion. Occupied many years as a teacher of youth, and a minister of the Gospel, he strove in his school and in the pulpit with energy, with eloquence, with effect, to impress these principles. Ceasing to preach he continued to recommend them by his practice ; his whole life exhibiting a pattern of the duties which that religion enjoins. This stone marks the spot where are deposited his remains. The useful works he established and promoted form his best monument, whilst the record of his virtues is engraven on the hearts of numbers comforted by his kindness, enlightened by his instruction, improved by his example.’

His widow, who survived him two years, and who is alluded to as ‘through life his faithful and affectionate companion, deserving and enjoying his unvaried confidence,’ was buried in the same place. Most of their children attained to a ripe old age. Mr. Dawson’s eldest son, Mr. Christopher Holdsworth Dawson, who succeeded to his father’s position in the Low Moor Works and lived at Royds Hall, died in 1865 at the age of 87 ; and two of his daughters reached the age of 89. Mr. Christopher Holdsworth Dawson showed himself a worthy successor of his father as a business man, and during the greater part of his long life employed himself diligently in the further development of the Low Moor Works. The Dawsons continued to occupy Royds Hall until a very few years ago, Miss Eliza Dawson, the only daughter of Mr. C. H. Dawson, being the last of the family who

resided there. Miss Dawson subsequently removed to Bramhope Manor, near Otley, at which place she died in May 1875. She was possessed of great wealth, and dispensed a considerable portion of it in the promotion of charitable objects. On one occasion she distributed upwards of 10,000*l.* anonymously amongst the local charities, and it was not until after her decease that the fact became publicly known. Miss Dawson's eldest brother, Mr. Joseph Dawson, died, aged 58, at La Chamberie, in 1866, and was buried in the Protestant portion of the cemetery at Tours. The present representatives of the Dawson family, who are not less noted for their benevolence and munificence than their predecessors, reside at Weston Hall, near Otley, and in the May of 1878 there were great rejoicings there on the occasion of the coming of age of Captain Dawson, the heir.

It is now time that we said something about another of the families which have acquired fame and fortune by being connected with the Low Moor Company—the Hirds. Mr. Richard Hird, the senior partner in the original Low Moor Company, resided at Rawdon, midway between Leeds and Bradford, a village which for the last hundred years has been engaged in the woollen manufacture, but which in the 'olden time,' when the monks of Kirkstall held spiritual sway over this part of the valley of the Aire, formed the patrimony of the barons of Rawdon. In those days the woods of Rawdon often resounded with the din of the chase, and the Knight of Rawdon went forth with a gay cavalcade in pursuit of the deer. An old poet, whose name is now forgotten, has left us a picture of those pleasant hunting days :

'Bright is the sun, and green is every
bough,
And eager is the crew, whose noisy mirth
Rings throughout Rawdon's woods at
St. John's call.
A hunting feast is marshalled for the
day :
Fairfax is there, gay Savile, Vavasour,
Old Fawkes, descended of a generous race,
And doomed his name to leave for gene-
rous sons ;
High Bellasis, of whom the peasants say
His fathers changed their lands, a wit-
less deed,
In the old time ; the Knight of Rawdon
Hall,
Rawdon de Rawdon, whose still greater
son,
A prince mid princes and a knight mid
knights,
Shall show such heart to shame an iron
age
As Chivalry in her best day had called
her own.'

The Hirds were settled upon a considerable estate at Rawdon from an early part of the sixteenth century. Their seat was at a place called Buckstone, where there was a shelving rock, which at one time served as a spot of secret worship for the early Puritans of the district. Mr. Richard Hird inherited all this property, and was accounted a wealthy man. He was deeply imbued with the commercial spirit, however ; and when his friend Joseph Dawson, the colliery owner and preacher, pointed out to him the great things that were to be done at Low Moor by a proper investment of capital and skill, he was not slow to espouse the project. There is little doubt that a large proportion of the 34,000*l.*, which was the amount of the original purchase-money paid by the company to the representatives of Squire Leeds, would be furnished by Mr. Hird. Mr. Hird had two daughters, the eldest of whom became heiress of the Rawdon estates, and married in 1795 the Rev. Lamplugh Wickham of Low Moor House, who, pursuant to the will of his father-in-law, assumed the surname of Hird on the day of his marriage. Mr. Richard Hird's second daugh-

ter was married to Sir Charles Des Vœux.

The Rev. Lamplugh Hird was prebendary of York and vicar of Paul, in the East Riding, and not only attended to his pastoral duties, but maintained a close connection with the Iron Works. He was a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of the West Riding, and used to hold magisterial sittings for the dispensation of justice in the Low Moor Chapel House. His first wife died in 1812, and in 1813 he married Hannah Frances, the daughter of the Rev. Lascelles Sturdy Lascelles, by whom he had one daughter. By his first wife he had nine children, and on his death in 1842 his family resumed the paternal name of Wickham, of which they had some reason to be proud; for they claimed to be descended in direct succession from the ancient house of Wykeham, two members of which had filled the episcopal chair of Winchester—William de Wykeham, founder of New College, Oxford, and Winchester College, who died in 1404, after having held the see for thirty-seven years; and William Wickham, who was successively Bishop of Lincoln and Bishop of Winchester, and died in 1595.

After the death of the Rev. Lamplugh Hird, his two sons, Mr. Henry Wickham Wickham and Mr. Lamplugh Wickham Wickham, represented their family in the Low Moor firm, and assisted with great tact and energy in the carrying forward of the commercial undertaking which had now grown to such large dimensions. The Low Moor firm had profited to a remarkable extent by the rapid development of machinery, and also by the many important contracts which they entered into from time to time for supplying the Government

with implements of war. The latter branch of business, indeed, was for many years one of the principal features of the Low Moor Works; and during the Crimean war Messrs. Hird, Dawson, & Hardy's furnaces were almost solely employed in smelting iron for the making of monster guns, mortars, and cannon-balls. Their gun-model room contains even to-day numerous specimens of the gigantic pieces of ordnance turned out of the works in the Sebastopol days. These objects duly commemorate the fact that Low Moor iron was extensively employed in reducing the walls of the Crimean stronghold, and serve also as a reminder that since those days the course of things has changed somewhat at Low Moor, the Government having monopolised to a considerable degree the manufacture of the dread engines of war. Weldless railway tyres, boilers for steam-engines, sugar-pans for the West Indies, water-pipes, gigantic beams, wheels, cylinders, and heavy iron-work of all descriptions are now made at these works; and the more primitive labour of smelting, forging, tilting, rolling, slitting the precious metal into bars, sheets, and rods, is done on a very extensive scale.

Mr. Henry Wickham Wickham was drafted into the business in early manhood. He was born in the year 1800, and received his education, first at the Bradford Grammar School, and afterwards at Oxford. With the view of fitting himself for the position to which he had been taught to look forward from his childhood, he devoted himself with great assiduity to the study of metallurgy; and on taking his place in the counting-house at Low Moor, he was found to be quite equal to the responsibility that was reposed

in him, and for many years he plodded steadily on and exercised a general superintendence over the works. In 1833 he was made a West Riding magistrate, and showed himself such an able and careful administrator, that in 1842 he was appointed chairman of quarter sessions. From that time he began to take a prominent part in the public affairs of the district, and in 1847 was put in nomination, along with his partner, Mr. Gathorne Hardy (now Lord Cranbrook), for the representation of Bradford in Parliament; but both he and Mr. Hardy were on that occasion unsuccessful. When the dissolution of 1852 took place, however, Mr. Wickham was again desired to allow himself to be brought forward as a candidate and consented. The other candidates were General Thompson and Mr. Robert Milligan. It is worthy of remark that the present senior member for Bradford, the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, was the proposer of General Thompson on the nomination-day. The contest was a very exciting one, and resulted in the return of Mr. Milligan and Mr. Wickham, the latter having a majority of six votes over General Thompson. Mr. Wickham continued to represent Bradford until the day of his death, which occurred in September 1867. Mr. Wickham, although he failed to make any particular mark upon the parliamentary history of the country, was nevertheless a faithful and painstaking representative, and won the confidence and esteem of all parties to such an extent that his constituents remained well satisfied with his services during the fifteen years that he sat for them.

Mr. Lamplugh Wickham Wickham is now the principal managing partner of the Low Moor

Works, and resides at Chestnut Grove, near Tadcaster. For the long space of half a century Mr. Lamplugh Wickham has been actively engaged in connection with the works, and much of the success which has attended the undertaking during that period has been due to the ability and energy evinced by him. He is a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of the West Riding; and although he never attempted to make for himself a public career, he has been associated with many prominent public movements, and both as a country gentleman and a man of business has earned an honoured name.

But distinguished as the Dawsons, the Hirds, and the Wickhams have been in many ways, it has been left to the third family of Low Moor partners—the Hardys—to command the greatest amount of public attention, their connection with the bar and the senate having in more recent times been of such an eminent character as to render their names and services familiar to the nation generally.

The John Hardy who was one of the original partners in the Low Moor Company was the grandfather of Lord Cranbrook and Sir John Hardy, and practised as an attorney in Bradford at the time that the iron-works were established, and for many years afterwards. He was a man of great energy of character, and held important sway at Low Moor to the end of his life. In 1803, when the country was in daily expectancy of a Bonapartist invasion, Mr. Hardy organised a cyclopean regiment of volunteers at Low Moor, composed of colliers and iron-workers; and had the opportunity ever served, there is little doubt this band of heavy infantry would have made a decided impression in the field of

battle. Accustomed to the sight of shot and shell in their daily labours, they regarded themselves as half soldiers to begin with, and there was much reliance placed on these stalwart fellows by the inhabitants, more especially as they had for their colonel such a gallant and indomitable gentleman as Mr. Hardy. The place where the iron regiment used to go through their military evolutions still bears the name of Soldier Green. It is interesting to note also that, although he was himself engaged in an industrial concern which had the effect of filling the air in the vicinity of the works with clouds of black smoke, he was one of the persons who in 1793 signed a notice to a cotton manufacturer, who proposed to erect a steam-engine at Bradford, threatening him with proceedings if he continued with his project and thereby created a nuisance. This notice had the effect of deferring the date of the introduction of the steam-engine into Bradford for fully five years; but Mr. Hardy lived to see the dreaded machines brought into general use in the neighbourhood, and his own firm largely engaged in promoting their adoption. Mr. Hardy's practice as a solicitor extended with the extension of the iron business, and for many years prior to his death he had a very lucrative connection, holding several good appointments.

His eldest son, Mr. John Hardy (father of Lord Cranbrook), was born in 1773, and was brought up to the bar. He succeeded to his father's share in the Low Moor Works, and the partnership made him an exceedingly wealthy man; still he remained faithful to the profession in which he had been educated, and made himself a leading position both at the West Riding sessions and at the

assizes. Mr. Hardy was a fluent speaker, fervid and impressive in his style, and very tenacious in argument. His success as an advocate brought him prominently into notice, and procured him the appointment of Recorder of Leeds, a post which he held for twenty-seven years. During the greater part of this period he resided with his family in the neighbourhood of Leeds; but on relinquishing the recordership removed to Heath Hall, near Wakefield. His abilities as a speaker, and his decided views on political matters, early marked him out as a proper aspirant for parliamentary honours, and in 1830 he was prevailed upon to become a candidate for the representation of Pontefract. Pontefract, however, declined the proffered alliance; and in 1832, when, by the passing of the Reform Bill, Bradford was allowed the privilege of sending two members to St. Stephen's, Mr. Hardy presented himself as a candidate for the honour of representing his native town. In those days the ceremony of nomination was the cause of great excitement, and it was the custom then and on every subsequent occasion, when a Low Moor partner had to be proposed on the Bradford hustings, for the foundrymen and colliers of Low Moor to come down in a body to exercise their lungs and hold up their hands in support of their master. This was a matter over which the proprietors had no control; the men had always great admiration for their masters, and were not to be deterred from showing it at such times as those. Mr. Hardy was duly elected on the polling-day, in conjunction with Mr. Lister, and the old ceremony of 'chairing' the members was subsequently proposed to be indulged in. The newly-elected members, however, sent their sons

to represent them on this occasion ; and Lord Cranbrook will doubtless still retain a lively recollection of the horse-play that the populace occupied themselves with, when the young proxies were rudely upset and the chairs were broken to pieces. Mr. Hardy was reëlected—this time at the head of the poll—in 1835, and on the returning-officer declaring him and his colleague to be duly returned, he addressed the crowd in words which might almost have been delivered by his sons, so thoroughly do they seem to represent the political views of the Hardys of to-day. He said if there was a man who went to Parliament desirous to promote reform, to accelerate the abolition of abuses, and still maintain uninjured the venerable institutions of the country, he was the man. He was ready with any man to take the pruning-knife and lop off the excrescences of the good old constitutional tree ; but he would not join any man who came with spade and pickaxe to uproot and level it with the earth. In 1837 there was another dissolution, and on presenting himself a third time before the electors of Bradford he was met with a more formidable opposition than previously, and suffered defeat. In 1841, however, he was again a candidate, and on the nomination-day was escorted from Low Moor to Bradford by an immense procession, in which bands of music, flags, banners, carriages, horses, and foundrymen curiously intermingled. Mr. Hardy was on this occasion returned at the head of the poll. In 1847 Mr. Hardy retired from parliamentary life, and at the general election of that year his son, Mr. Gathorne Hardy (Lord Cranbrook), and his partner, Mr. Wickham, became candidates ; but the Low Moor éle-

ment was doomed to be unsuccessful, Mr. William Busfield and General Thompson being the members elected. Mr. Hardy senior now betook himself to less exciting pursuits, and passed the remainder of his days in comparative seclusion. In 1849 he bought the Dunstall Hall estate in Staffordshire, and resided there until his death, which occurred in September 1855, the year before Mr. Gathorne Hardy made his first appearance in Parliament. Mr. Hardy, who was eighty-two years of age when he died, had married Isabel, daughter of Mr. Richard Gathorne of Kirkby Lonsdale, by whom he had a family of twelve children, only three of them being sons—John Hardy, Charles Hardy, and Gathorne Hardy.

Mr. John Hardy succeeded to the Dunstall Hall property, and for many years has had a seat in the House of Commons. He had a baronetcy conferred upon him by Lord Beaconsfield in 1876. Sir John Hardy is well known at the Low Moor Works, in which he has always taken a deep interest, and one of his sons is now actively employed as a managing partner.

Mr. Charles Hardy, Mr. John Hardy's second son, was more intimately concerned with the iron-works than either of his brothers, however, the greater part of his life having been taken up with the business of superintending the gigantic establishment. Mr. Charles Hardy was born in 1813, and in 1837, at the age of twenty-four, he took up his abode in the neighbourhood of Low Moor, and thenceforward devoted himself with untiring assiduity to the duties of his position. For many years his time was almost solely occupied with the works ; but he was a man of great benevolence of spirit, and had a deep reverence

for religious matters. He resided at Odsal House during the time of his active employment at Low Moor, and from thence he proceeded every Sunday, no matter what the state of the weather or how full his house might be of visitors, to teach his class in the Sunday-school. Nearly all his spare time was given to the promotion of educational and religious objects, and he gave liberally of his wealth in support of the charitable and other institutions of the district. It was mainly due to his efforts that a scheme was set on foot for building ten new churches in Bradford, to the cost of erecting and endowing which he was the largest contributor. He lived to see seven of the ten churches completed. The only part he took in the management of public affairs was as a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant. He was a frequent chairman of quarter sessions. Unlike his brothers, Lord Cranbrook and Sir John Hardy, Mr. Charles Hardy was of a remarkably diffident disposition, and was never more ill at ease than when called upon to speak in public. When he did speak, however, it was so evident that he spoke from the conviction and sincerity of his heart, that he was always listened to with respect. Unostentatious, kind, and considerate, he was regarded with honest affection by the Low Moor workpeople, and when he died at Chilham Castle, Kent, in 1867, the event was much deplored by all who had known him.

We now come to speak of the member of the Low Moor firm whose name stands most prominent of all in the public mind,—Lord Cranbrook. He was born in 1814, and was educated at Shrewsbury School and Oriel College, Oxford, where he took a second-class in classics, and graduated

B.A. in 1836. In 1838 he married Jane, daughter of Mr. James Orr, of Holywood House, County Down. His father destined him for the law, under the impression that his natural abilities would find more congenial occupation in advocacy than in dancing attendance upon the furnaces and forges of Low Moor. Thus it came about that Mr. Gathorne Hardy in a measure alienated himself from the celebrated iron-works from which his family's immense wealth had chiefly sprung. He paid frequent visits to Low Moor, it is true, and stayed there occasionally for a lengthened period, but he never identified himself so thoroughly with the management of the establishment as did his brothers, or as did his father or grandfather. It was evident from the first that Mr. Gathorne Hardy was bent upon a public career. He was called to the bar at the Inner Temple in 1840, and practised for several years. Meanwhile he paid great attention to the course of political events, and got into such high favour with his party that in 1847, on the retirement of his father, he was nominated, as has already been pointed out, as a candidate for the representation of Bradford. On that occasion he said, 'I enter the arena of political life unfettered by party ties, and with a sincere determination to use all my energies in the furtherance of national and not party objects. Believing as I do that under our present constitution civil and religious liberty is secured to all, I would, while acknowledging the necessity of progress, lay no incautious hand upon institutions under which this vast empire has been consolidated, and which, though they may require modification, ought not to be subjected to organic

change.' His proposer described him as 'a man with a heart of oak, and a chip of the old block.' From that time, when he was defeated, until 1856, Mr. Gathorne Hardy made no further attempt to get into Parliament, but in that year he was elected for Leominster, which place he continued to represent until 1865. On Lord Derby's accession to power in 1858 Mr. Hardy was appointed Under-Secretary for the Home Department, a post which he filled until June 1859, when his party went out of office. The turning point in Mr. Hardy's career was in 1865, when he was brought forward in opposition to Mr. Gladstone at Oxford University, and was successful in turning out the statesman by whom the University had been represented for eighteen years. Leominster did Mr. Hardy the honour at the same time of reëlecting him, but he naturally chose to sit for the University. When the Conservatives assumed the reins of office in 1866, Mr. Hardy was made President of the Poor-Law Board, with a seat in the Cabinet, and in May 1867 he was appointed to the Home Secretaryship. The more recent events in Mr. Gathorne Hardy's career may be very briefly outlined. When the Conservatives returned to power in 1874 he was appointed Secretary for War, and has more recently held the post which he now fills, that of Secretary of State for the Indian Department. Last year he was raised to the peerage under the title of Viscount Cranbrook. Two of his sons, the Hon. John Stewart Gathorne-Hardy, and the Hon. A. E. Gathorne-Hardy, possess seats in the House of Commons, the former being a representative for Rye, and the latter for Canterbury; and his lordship has another son, the Hon. Harold Gathorne-Hardy, who is a

partner in the Low Moor Works, and is actively employed there as one of the resident managers. The working manager of the establishment is Mr. W. Nugent Smyth, who lives at Royds Hall. It may be mentioned also that the Hon. Harold Gathorne-Hardy is a West Riding magistrate, as is also his cousin, Mr. Lawrence Hardy, the son of Sir John Hardy, and that both gentlemen, in addition to giving much time and attention to the iron-works, are often to be found exercising their magisterial functions at the Bradford West Riding Court.

In 1854 the Low Moor Company obtained a considerable accession to their undertaking by the purchase of the neighbouring iron-works of Bierley, which had existed from about the year 1810, having been founded by Mr. Nathaniel Aked, and subsequently carried on with great success by Mr. Henry Leah, who died in 1846 possessed of a handsome fortune, the whole of which had been acquired in carrying on the Bierley works. These works are within a short distance of Bierley Hall, where Dr. Richardson, the famous naturalist, lived in the early part of the eighteenth century, and which has since been occupied in turn by Miss Currer, the present Sir Matthew Wilson, Mr. Henry Leah, and others. It was in this hall that Miss Currer kept her library of 20,000 volumes, the printed catalogue of which occupied five hundred pages. At the Bierley Iron-works, which have been greatly extended since their absorption into the Low Moor system, pig-iron alone is manufactured, the ore found on the Bierley estate being of the same quality as that underlying the original Low Moor estate.

The history of the Low Moor Iron-works stretches over a period

of ninety years, during which time, as we have shown, the colossal establishment has been the means of giving princely fortunes to representative after representative of the three families who were the original promoters of the undertaking. It is somewhat remarkable that the business instincts and great natural abilities of the founders of these works should have been inherited so fully by their descendants, and that the

partnership should, after all these years, still remain confined to the members of those families. Low Moor will always hold a prominent place in the history of the iron industries of this country, which it has assisted so much to develop; and linked as it is with so many illustrious names, and productive as it has been of wealth, Low Moor deserves to rank high amongst the places where 'fortunes in business' have been found.

BALLAD OF PAST DELIGHT.

WHERE are the dreams of the days gone by,
 The hopes of honour, the glancing play
 Of fire-new fancies that filled our sky,
 The songs we sang in the middle May,
 Carol and ballad and roundelay?
 Where are the garlands our young hands twined
 Life's but a memory, well-a-way!
All else flits past on the wings of the wind.

Where are the ladies fair and high—
 Marie and Alice and Maud and May,
 And merry Madge with the laughing eye—
 And all the gallants of yesterday
 That found us merry and held us gay?
 Under the mould we must look to find
 Some; and the others are worn and gray.
All else flits past on the wings of the wind.

I know of nothing that lasts, not I,
 Save a heart that is true to its love away—
 A love that is won with tear and sigh
 And never changes or fades away,
 In a breast that is oftener sad than gay;
 A tender look and a constant mind—
 These are the only things that stay.
All else flits past on the wings of the wind.

ENVOI.

Prince, I counsel you, never sigh
 For the hopes that the years have left behind.
 Look you have love when you come to die:
All else flits past on the wings of the wind.

J. P.

HOW I SPENT MY HOLIDAY IN TOWN.

BY W. W. FENN,

AUTHOR OF 'HALF HOURS OF BLIND MAN'S HOLIDAY.'

RELEASED, but not free ; that is, released from the mill, but not free to leave town. These are conditions commonly arising amidst the infinite variety of occupations which hold prisoner the inhabitants of this mighty Babylon. They were mine, and it instantly became a question how I should spend my month's leisure. Surely, if a man have a hobby (and he is an unhappy being who is without one), here is the chance for trotting it out and getting a rare ride ; so it seemed easy to answer the query in my case. But then my hobby is one which is supposed to require for its exercise open country, with heathery commons, mountain sides, or swelling downs, beetling cliffs and rocky shores, leafy groves, cool lakes, sparkling rivers, or tumbling seas ; in short, a lovely landscape in some shape is considered indispensable for my animal, whose name is 'Sketching from Nature,' and therefore the question what I could do with my time, shut up in London, still might seem difficult to answer. Not a bit of it ! Why should I not go in for some London landscape ? Painters go abroad and ransack foreign towns and cities for picturesque material ; why should I not go to London in the artist's sense of the expression, and see if I could not, amidst its queer unlovely slums, its broad open sweeps of river-banks, with the barges and shipping, its crowded thoroughfares, streets, lanes, alleys, quiet old inns of court and law, its unremembered squares, its parks and gardens, with all the varied combinations

of chimney-tops, roofs, angles, arches, towers, and spires, find sufficient of the picturesque to yield a subject or two that would compensate for the sketches I love to make when out on my usual rural holiday trip. Not that the idea was new, but it was new to me. Hosts of artists had been to London before me, but again, what of that ? Where have the ubiquitous brethren of the brush not been ? Yes ; but how about sitting down to sketch in London ? how about the discomfort, confusion, botheration, and scrimmage inseparable from such a proceeding ? Why, doubtless, it would be possible to find a quiet corner or window where, free from molestation, one might sit and revel in the glorious effects which the veil of smoke ever rising from the myriad chimneys, and mingling with the cloud and sunshine, is perpetually throwing over the wilderness of brick and mortar. If such a retreat could be found, then, by the cunning of art, this agent, in itself so unpleasant, could be turned to the best account and be made to hide such of the ugly details as might mar the picture, and, by a clever disposition of atmospheric effects, help to enhance the value of each beauty.

Pondering the question, I suddenly bethought me of a certain top room in the house of a friend, whence a remarkable view of roofs, chimneys, and distance, including the Westminster clock-tower and the Crystal Palace, was to be had. Ambitious, like all amateurs, not flinching from the most mighty subjects that none

less than a Turner could deal with, I settled that this was what I would 'go for.' Besides, the notion was original, I thought; I could remember no London landscape composed of a foreground of roofs, as an Irishman might say, and painted from the roof level. It was an Asmodeus-like idea, and my enthusiasm rose at it; I too would 'take the roofs off' after my own fashion.

The friend was away, like the rest of the world, with his family at the seaside, but the housekeeper knew me, and by noon of the second day's leisure I had got to work on the quaint subject.

The precise locality matters not, but the house was in the corner of a West-end square, and there being no exit from that corner the residences joined each other at right angles, so that the windows of each commanded those of each for some distance, an inconvenient architectural arrangement, but, as it turned out, one to which I am deeply indebted.

Sitting in the attic then, which had been converted into a snug little den, and with the sash thrown up, I was soon revelling in the marvellous prospect. But somehow by degrees I found myself 'mooning' over it rather than working at it. It was so wonderful, that far-stretching wilderness, that desert of tiles and slates, and the thoughts that it induced were so many and so weird that the pencil frequently remained idle in my hands for ten minutes at a time. What tragedy, comedy, romance, what strange scenes of life, were there not going on beneath those roofs even at the moment I sat gazing over them! I began picturing the possibilities vividly, and felt more Asmodeus-like than ever.

It was a quiet square, at least in this corner; there was little or

no traffic either foot or carriage, owing to its peculiar position. Nearly every house was shut up; fashionable London was at its dullest and sultriest. The sun beat fiercely upon pavement, wall, and roof; the dusty smoke-dried trees and shrubs in the square garden drooped languidly under the still fierce heat. Few people were moving, few even were visible. Here and there, at a window high up, a man in his shirt-sleeves or a servant-girl lolled out; but in a house three doors off from where I was, and at the opposite angle, I discovered metal more attractive than any I had ever beheld before. On the third floor, that is two below my level, so that if I chose I could look straight into the room, there sat reading at the open window—well, it was there that I first saw her—the woman who has been the light and joy of my life, which being the case I may be pardoned if I say but little of the way she impressed me from the moment when our eyes met, and even less about her appearance. What she was like and what I felt must be inferred from the simple statement that I, a cool and heart-whole man of five-and-thirty, who had seen something of life, fell desperately in love with her at first sight. The window-sill was full of flowers which she, fairest of them all, busied herself with from time to time as she looked up from her book, whilst sometimes at her knee, and sometimes scampering about the room, was a jolly little boy of three or four. In the background I discerned a nursery maid with a still younger child in her lap. What was the relationship in this family picture? The beautiful reader was not the mother; I felt certain of that after very little speculation. No; though not in her first youth,

there was something about her which convinced me of this. The deep mourning garb of the whole party, perhaps, seemed to suggest a clue. Was she not bestowing merely a mother's care upon her sister's children? But after all, what business was it of mine? I had perched myself in this eyrie to make a sketch, and not to pry into my neighbours' affairs. Let me go on with my work, then; and so on with it I went after a fashion all through the rest of the day, and the next, and the next, pretending to draw the interminably varying roofs and chimney-stacks, and failing miserably. What had come to me? My hand seemed to have lost the little cunning it once possessed, and yet for a week and more, day by day, from noon till late into the summer twilight, did I perseveringly pursue my futile purpose,—for futile it was, and no wonder! That picture of which the flower-decked window was the frame had rendered it entirely impossible for me to think of any other, so finally I gave myself up to the contemplation of it, as it was presented daily to my view.

Of course I learned something about the inhabitants of the house, but what I learned is of no consequence; they were people quite out of my sphere, and I had little chance of getting an introduction. Besides, the widower master (for my original surmise was correct) was abroad, and the whole of the house was shut up except that third floor, retained for nurseries. *She* never went out in the middle of the day, it was too hot; but nearly every evening, when the children were gone to bed, she strolled away for an hour or so to the neighbouring park. By a curious coincidence this always happened about the time I was, as I called it, knock-

ing off work, save the mark! Did *she* notice this coincidence? That is nobody's business but mine, and I refuse to entertain the question.

About the tenth morning of my studentship of London landscape, the painters began to take possession of the house. An enormous ladder reaching from pavement to roof was planted all but in front of 'my lady's bower,' and I could see during the day that preparations were being made for a departure: she too was going out of town; going with the children and nurse no doubt to the seaside. Life looked a dreary blank as I arrived at this conclusion; my heart sank within me. However, as twilight came on, at the usual hour she went for her walk; but I in my despair had not the energy to quit my observatory. What did it signify now what I did? So I sat like an abject imbecile, drearily gazing through the stifling, airless, murky gloaming across my desert of roofs; sat there until the illuminated face of the clock in the Westminster tower shone like the rising full moon. Big Ben had just boomed out ten, when I was aroused from the state of miserable torpor into which I had fallen by observing another bright light flash out upon the darkness. It rose and fell fitfully, not as coming from a candle, but from a fire; yet who would want a fire on a night like this in a nursery? for her sitting-room was the nursery, and the light was there! At its brightest it showed me that no one was in the apartment, and, after a minute's watching, it was evident the fire was not in the grate. A horrible suspicion dawned, and presently ripened into conviction; the back room, which opened by a door into the front, was on fire—it was there the children slept.

To rush into the street to give the alarm was only a natural impulse, but think of my dismay after blundering in the dark down the five flights of stairs to find that the street door would not open ! To call for the housekeeper was again only another natural impulse ; but the wretched old woman answered not. Supposing I had left at my usual time, she had gone out, locked the door, and taken the key. Every room was locked up too above the basement except my den, and *her* attic even with it. After battering helplessly with my fists against the street door for a minute, and shouting in the hope of attracting the attention of some passer-by, I flew up-stairs again as fast as the darkness would let me. One look at the burning room showed that the fire was getting firm hold, and the utter absence of life in the houses and square showed that it had not yet been discovered, despite a thin wreath of smoke that was creeping out of the partly opened window. Not an instant was to be lost, if those two poor children were to be saved from suffocation, for I could see that dense fumes were curling and swirling about the chamber !

Without hesitation I got on to the parapet hallooing loudly, and began making my way towards the angle of the roofs ; but it was ticklish work, the ledge was narrow, and though pretty strong in the head and a good climber, I dared not look below ; besides, this house was a story higher than those on the other side, and directly in the corner there was a drop of some eight or ten feet from one roof to the other. Still on my hands and knees I managed at last to reach the corner and somehow got down to the lower level. Here there were fewer obstacles to contend with, and I got over the

two intervening roofs easily. My purpose had been to try and get into the house by the usual trap-door on the roof ; but there was now so little light left in the sky that for a long while I could not find it, and when I did, it too was securely fastened. What was to be done ? Scrambling back to the parapet I came upon the top of the painter's ladder, which I had forgotten in the darkness. Then remembering that it stood in front of the window my impulse was to get upon it and descend. My continual shouting had begun to collect by this time a knot of people in front of the house idly gaping upwards, for doubtless the mere light in the room as seen from the street hardly raised any suspicion ; it was only the commanding position of my observatory that had enabled me to divine its cause. Hurriedly I explained to the crowd what was the matter.

'Knock at the door,' I cried ; 'pull the bell, raise an alarm, or life will be lost.'

'There is no one at home,' was the shout in reply, 'the house is shut up.'

'Knock again and again,' I continued ; 'send some one up the ladder.'

'We can't,' was the reply, 'we can't loose the plank tied against it here.'

'Then I must get down it,' I answered, and down it I began to go cautiously.

Now I am in front of the window, and by aid of the glare can see straight into the further room, in spite of the smoke. The sash is a light French one, opening inwards and slightly ajar, and a little iron balcony holds the flowers ; but between it and me there is a gap of nearly three feet. I cannot, dare not, make a spring for it. I must go up again until the slant of the ladder brings me

over the balcony, then I can drop into it. Ah, but will it bear my weight? The risk is frightful; but I don't stop to think. In another moment I am hanging by both hands from the inner side of the ladder, just above the flowers. I shudder, but let go my hold, and with a tremendous crash, and throwing myself forward as I alight on the balcony, fall headlong into the room.

I feel I have hurt and cut myself with the broken glass, but I scramble to my feet, only immediately to fall again half stifled with the smoke. But close to the floor I can breathe better. Crawling rapidly on towards the door of the back room, I can see the curtains there are in flames. The cry of a child catches my ear, and presently under a table I discover the little boy in his nightdress. Dragging him with me, I grope about until I come upon a further door. Raising myself for one instant I open it, and the smoke and sparks pour out in volumes upon the landing as I gain it. But there is the younger child doubtless still in its little crib. Leaving go of my first charge I again fall upon my hands and knees, and reënter the room. That is the worst business of all, for the draught caused by the open door has fanned the flames terrifically. I am nearly overpowered, but by great good luck I soon get hold of what I feel sure are the legs of the cot. I raise my arm up over the edge of it, and my hand comes in contact with the warm soft body of the second child. To drag this one out is only the work of another moment, and more than half suffocated I crawl away and regain the door and the landing. Then, snatching up the little boy from the corner where I had placed him, I find my way, God knows how,

down the staircase with my two charges. All this takes much longer to accomplish than it does to record, but by the time I finally reach the hall, the firemen have arrived, and are battering in the street door with their hatchets. I see two of them enter and come towards me. Then I am done for, I suppose, for a great giddiness seizes me, and I do not know what happened next.

After such a sensational episode any detailed account of the end of my 'holiday in town' must fall rather flat. Let me not attempt to give it then; what the ultimate and happy climax to it was, must, like the rest of one's private affairs, be inferred. All that concerns the reader lies in a nutshell. Knowing that her mistress would be out that night later than usual, the nurse, joining company with the only other servant, together with my friend's housekeeper, the three went forth on their own devices, locking up their respective houses, as is sometimes the playful habit of such retainers.

The fire was soon extinguished; but not before it had done a vast amount of damage; how it originated is not quite certain, but we suppose that little Ernest, who is a sad young turk, got out of bed and upset the night-light, and then in terror crawled under the table, where I found him nearly choked. His sleeping little sister was quite senseless for an hour and more after she was rescued, and the experts in such matters declared that another few minutes in those suffocating fumes would have put both children beyond mortal aid.

However this may be, deservedly or not, I got the credit of being their preserver, and in the course of time asked for my reward, and got that also.

SUSSEX DOWNS AND VILLAGES.

I PROPOSE, right trusty and entirely beloved reader, to say certain things concerning the downs and villages of Sussex. I may at least claim to write with some fulness of love and experience in the matter. For many a mile, on various occasions, have I traversed those downs; on many a summer day I have threaded the shady lanes, and passed over the broad meadows, and visited the quiet little villages that nestle in their combes, or fringe these coasts, or lie amid the woodlands. I would advise the jaded Londoner, as he rushes off to Brighton, to stop on his road, and refresh both mind and body amid these noble hills and quiet resting-places. Often in my wanderings I have met the Brightonian, whether resident or visitor, on horseback or afoot, wandering in this unconventional rustic region, joyfully exchanging the monotonous beach and league-long line of terraces for the sweet simplicity of as true an Arcadia as may be found in rural England. I think of the wits and worthies who have delighted in these landscapes and seascapes. Honest old Cobbett jogs by on his horse, making his shrewd observations on man and beast. Bright-eyed Shelley amuses himself on the biggest Sussex hills, or wanders forth, a very Alastor, breathing the 'spirit of solitude.' The grave, patient, tender White, from his own Selborne, comes forth year after year, and thinks that in the subalpine conformation of the downs we have the true lines of the highest Swiss beauty. Learned Southey walks the heights till the

gloom of evening wraps him round, and descends to the village where his son-in-law was rector. The Baroness Bunsen writes: 'I had a very home feeling in seeing the little Sussex hills, the whole country little waves, as you remember, with deep narrow dells; and the hedgerows promised me the sight of primroses in the spring.' Dr. Mantell made his great geological discoveries in these regions, once full of tropic forests and the vastest fauna and flora of primeval ages. The reader is of course acquainted with the rough general configuration of the county—the line of seacoast, the fringe of fields and uplands, the range of downs, and the broad expanse of weald stretching onwards to the distant hills. The downs extend some seventy miles from Beachy Head into Hampshire, with their green sheep-walks, chalky cliffs, the thin, elastic, but withal rich thymy herbage, the circular ponds, the isolated clumps of trees, the hundreds of shepherds and the hundred thousands of sheep. 'In their sweet undulations,' says the late Mark Anthony Lower, the enthusiastic antiquary whose labours have shed a flood of illustration over Sussex archæology, 'there are continually changing curves and indents, which, vary as they may—from the precipitous valley, down which a confident horseman would scarcely urge his coursers, to the gentle declivity where the most delicate lady (in imitation of the fairies which of old haunted it) might dance—are always lines of beauty, such as we confidently

believe have nowhere else an existence, except perhaps in some graceful island group in the Pacific.'

Sussex forcibly recalls the description which Thucydides gives of Attica—the men of the plain, the men of the hills, and the men of the seaboard. The downs run as a natural barrier from east to west. People on either side good-humouredly talk of their Cisalpine or Ultramontane brethren. The downs as you approach from the north have a finer appearance than from the seaboard, with their vast shadowy combes and steep escarpments. In this paper, as it will be convenient to assign some lines of limitation, I shall almost entirely deal with West Sussex, exhorting my readers, however, when staying at such convenient places as Tunbridge Wells, Hastings, and Eastbourne, carefully to work up all the localities within their reach. In speaking of the downs, Beachy Head is a very convenient *terminus ad quem* or *terminus à quo*. It has a wonderful combination of natural and historical associations. This imposing headland, the beloved of artists, the shrine of tourists, though by no means the highest point, is the most famous and most striking. Beachy Head, the extreme end of the downs, is the favourite resort from Eastbourne, which, on the whole, is the favourite summer watering-place of the Sussex coast, Brighton always excepted. Why it should be called Beachy Head is an open question, as there is no more beach here than anywhere else along the coast, if so much. A great deal might be said about Beachy Head, at the beginning or the end of a discussion on the downs. Close under the headland there is a curious cavern, where two chambers were once

excavated by a worthy parson, partly for a philanthropic purpose, and partly that he might escape the stormy rhetoric of his *cara sposa*. In stormy weather he used to go here with his lantern, and hang out a warning light to vessels, and have a place of refuge in case they were shipwrecked. This was a great contrast to his unworthy parishioners, the wreckers of the coast. On one occasion the parson saved a dozen lives from a Dutch vessel; but on another occasion a vessel was wrecked by thrusting its prow into one of his excavated chambers, called the Parson's Nose. The headland has a dreadful name for shipwrecks and for battles. The samphire grows abundantly, and most welcome it has been to many a shipwrecked mariner, telling him that at last he has climbed above high-water mark. The seaboard of Sussex of late years has become famous for what is called shore-shooting. All the wildfowl of the coast seem to congregate on Beachy Head. It is curious that an immense number of the birds of the downs and of the sea dash themselves against the Brighton lamps. As the downs retire inland, the wildfowl desert them, and are succeeded by gentler broods, such as the wheatear—the English ortolan—which, at the proper season, may be largely purchased in the Brighton shops.

It is a wonderful relief when you are staying at Brighton to get away from the crowds and the glare to the downs and the cliffs. How prettily Fanny Kemble describes it in one of her letters! 'I walked and ran along the edge of the cliffs, gazing and pondering and enjoying the solemn sound and the brilliant sight, and the nervous excitement of a slight sense of fear as I peeped over at the depths below me. . . . The tide

had not yet come in, but its usual height when up was indicated, first by a delicate waving fringe of seaweed like very bright green moss, and then, nearer in shore, by an incrustation of chalk washed from the cliffs, which formed a deep embossed silver embroidery along the coast as far as eye could see. The sunshine was dazzling, and its light on the detached masses of milky chalk which lay far beneath us made them appear semi-transparent, like fragments of alabaster or cornelian. . . . I think a fight with smugglers up that steep staircase at night, with a heavy sea rolling and roaring close under it, would be glorious! When I reached the top my father said it was time to go home; so we returned. The Parade was crowded like Hyde Park in the midst of the season; and when once I was out of the crowd, and could look down upon it from our windows as it promenaded up and down, I never saw anything gayer: carriages of every description—most of them open—cavalcades of ladies and gentlemen riding to and fro, throngs of smart bonnets and fine dresses; and beyond all this the high tide, with one broad crimson path across it thrown by the sun, looking as if it led into some enchanted world beyond the waters.'

There is one portion of the Sussex downs and villages with which the Brighton people are particularly well acquainted. I mean of course the Devil's Dyke and the villages lying beneath, especially Poynings, with its square embattled tower rising amid thick foliage. There is no road near Brighton more frequented than that which goes from the town to the Dyke. In the hunting season it is a great place for the meets. In the summer months

there is often a regular stream of carriages and horsemen to the Dyke. Water is very scarce here, having to be brought from a great distance. The view is magnificent, extending for good eyes on a clear day to Windsor Castle and the Isle of Wight, over some dozen counties. The Brighton doctors are very fond of prescribing a ride on the downs to their patients. The pure exhilarating mountain air is the very best of tonics. Now in this village of Poynings there lives a clergyman of poetic mind, a grandson of Lord Chancellor Erskine, who has celebrated the Dyke and his own romantic village. I was highly interested by reading a ms. letter of Sir Walter Scott greatly praising Mr. Holland's youthful Muse. He commemorates both church and Dyke in descriptive sonnets, one of which may be here quoted:

'Mount of the verdant brow and sunlit smile,
O'erlooking, on one hand, the distant weald,
And, on the other, Ocean's burnished shield
By numerous banks embossed; with pile to pile
Of kindred downs long-linked in wavy file,
Engirding hamlet, wood, dameane, and field!
Such varied charms thy diverse prospects yield,
The toil-worn traveller's languor to beguile.
Nor less the joy of those who from below
Gaze towards thy summit, swept by venturous cars,
And trace the cloud-rack mirrored in the glow,
Or scan at eve thy coronal of stars.
Thus, height magnetic, long as Time endure,
The champaign's boast, the haven's cy-nosure!'

Much of the beauty of Poynings is to be found in the gardens of the rectory, a romantic dell, a mimic waterfall, and dense masses of foliage. It is pleasant after a hot day's work to rest within the shadow, and listen to 'myriads

of rivulets hurrying through the lawns, and murmuring of innumerable bees,' albeit Mr. Tennyson's 'myriads of rivulets' always struck me as involving a poetic license. The church may be regarded as a kind of cathedral of the downs. It is a cool spacious church, cruciform, and the square central tower is one of the landmarks of the weald. It has been in some measure restored, but requires still more; and the Crown, which, in default of heirs, now possesses the ancient manor of the Barons de Poynings, has promised to do its part. The Poynings title is one of the many borne by the Dukes of Northumberland. The castellated mansion was burnt down a century and a half ago; and still two ancient yews,

'Robed in sombre green,
Stern vigil hold o'er Poynings' prostrate
towers
And quaint dim courts immersed in orchard
bowers.'

At Poynings you are far away from the railways—'Thanks be,' as the Wesleyan Cornish say. You can nowhere see a train or hear a whistle. Now, instead of going over that well-worn road to Brighton, let me indicate the road I took to rejoin the line, and so be in the middle of everything. It takes us by fine old parks and 'places.' Notice in the lanes, what you now see very seldom in England, the patient oxen drawing their heavy burdens. The miry lanes of the weald of Sussex were once the very worst in the whole of England, and in the winter season they have not lost their claim to that high distinction. You return through Newtimber, through well-timbered lanes which form a natural leafy cluster. The sound of a stream, hid away in dense foliage, is heard. The old Place is encircled by a moat, which in one part spreads out into lake-

like dimensions. A 'private road' conducts the wanderer into Danny Park. It is called 'private,' but one of the oldest inhabitants assured me that the right of way has been always contested. As, however, the road is rather of that kind which runs from a place nobody comes from to a place to which nobody ever goes, it is obvious that the question is hardly worth litigation. There is a right of way through Danny Park, which is a delightful ramble, leaving the fine old mansion on the left. It is worth your while to go half a mile out of your way to see the very interesting old village of Hurstpierpoint, and its fine church, mainly due to the munificence of the Borrer family, which almost alone of the Sussex county churches is open to all comers all day long. Hassock's Gate is the nearest station here; or you might skirt Clayton Priory, with some picturesque peeps at St. John's Common, and come out at Burgess Hill, which has a 'spick-span new station' for a locality which might almost be called a spick-span new town—a strong contrast to the quiet old-world down villages, and which has the solitary tall chimney, connected with pottery works, which is to be found in all Sussex.

But we have further wanderings in the combe villages. One of these is appropriately called Comber. The population is about seventy. It lies in a deep hollow, in the heart of the mighty hills, and all around it is a thick environment of trees. The little villages in the combes and hollows of the downs are all quaint, picturesque, and interesting. Just let me note a few which I have explored more or less. There is Pyecombe—the combe as usual denotes the valley—which includes

Wolstenbury, the highest or highest but one of the downs. A very primitive place is Pyecombe. I met a worthy individual, who had lived all her life there, and had never been to the Devil's Dyke, two miles off. There was an English settler who lived three miles from the Falls of Niagara, and came home from America without once seeing them. Wolstenbury Down will show you what a down can be. You have to descend the escarped side by ladderlike steps cut out of the chalk. Let me here gratefully commemorate a certain little grove which I found near Wolstenbury in this parish of Pyecombe. Here I conducted a happy picnic-party one hot day. As a rule the downs are perfectly treeless, and you cannot have a picnic unsheltered from the burning sun. If you can only combine shelter with the fresh air and immense views, then you have things in perfection. This is what I had near Wolstenbury Beacon—for beacon-fires have often been lighted on the summit of this down—and in Pyecombe parish. For a similar combination you must go some dozen miles off to Chanctonbury Ring, which is still more famous, and the great resort of the Worthing people. Now it is a curious fact that this Pyecombe, though it stands so high and has a chalky soil, used to suffer dreadfully from the plague, and has also suffered from cholera. There was a certain Mr. Hollingdale, who once had a farm, and now has a monument in the parish, who had an undisguised aversion to the plague. He excavated a cave for himself a mile off, where he took up his abode; but returning home too soon he caught the infection, and died. There is a fearful mysterious story connected with the slopes of the southern downs,

which is centred at Pyecombe. Some gentlemen returning home about one o'clock in the morning from a shooting-party at Newtimber—it must have been from a dinner after the shooting-party—came upon the dead body of a man whom they knew. It was a spot on the road running up into the downs, a spot where the road has a strong rise in it. The body was that of a Brighton brewer, who some weeks before had received an anonymous letter warning him that there was an intention to rob him the next time that he took his business journey to Horsham. His return journey to Brighton was traced from one toll-bar to another, and the gatekeepers, knowing his hours, were expecting him. He had passed Terry's Crossgate about three miles from Henfield, and would be due at the lonely Dale's Gate, three miles beyond, shortly afterwards. He was found killed and robbed on a road skirting a field ominously called 'Deadways Field.' An inquest was held at the Plough Inn, Pyecombe; but the murderer was never discovered. Curiously enough, seven years after, the dead man's watch was found in a neighbouring pond. There are cruel tragedies associated with some of the loveliest localities. It would be possible to draw up a formidable list of Sussex murderers, although it should be said in fairness that most other counties make a still larger show.

Sussex was famous for its smugglers. In fact smuggling was a recognised branch of industry. I have heard of the best people in the county who had made a reputable fortune through smuggling. About twenty years ago a Sussex author, speaking of Sussex smuggling, says, 'It would be improper to enter into any details which might involve the

character of those still alive.' Their old caves and retreats are still pointed out. Under the arch that is supposed to separate Hastings from St. Leonards there was once something very like a regular battle between the king's men and the smugglers. A great deal of false glamour has been shed by painters and novelists on the subject of smuggling. The Sussex smugglers were often a terrible crew, shrinking from nothing in their lawless pursuits. They sometimes became pirates and murderers. The Hawkhurst gang was especially infamous. Hawkhurst is in Kent; but the chief members of the gang were Sussex men. They seized on a Custom-house officer who had borne witness against them, flogged him to death, and buried him in a hole on the downs. Mr. Sargent, the uncle of two young ladies who became the wives of Bishop Wilberforce and Cardinal Manning, was shot by a pondside near Midhurst. The other day, taking a walk near Chichester, I came to what is called 'The Murderer's Stile.' A soldier, intending to shoot an officer, slew a stranger who was carelessly lounging at a stile in the lonely lane.

Thus the trail of the serpent is over the softest, most pastoral, and sweetest scenery in old England. Only I exempt the stalwart simple-minded Sussex shepherds from complicity in this evil. They correspond simply and admirably to the downs and the weald, as truly Arcadian in their way as the Westmoreland statesmen or the shepherds of the Yorkshire wolds and glens. Such a book as Mr. Fleet's *Glimpses of our Ancestors* brings clearly before us the Sussex countryfolk, and especially the shepherd race. Very little variety was there in their monotonous life. A sheep-shearing

would be a great occasion, although there are not many shepherds who can shear. The shearers would form regular companies, and have matches against one another. Forty or fifty thousand sheep have been known to be 'washed' at a time. The birds form the greatest excitement in a shepherd's life. He could earn almost as much as his regular wages by catching wheatears, only he often found that the hawks had been before him and done great harm. The shepherd was cunning in the matter of plovers' eggs. He could sometimes snare a hare, and much oftener a rabbit. The bustard lingers longest on these Sussex downs.

Let us look at one or two more of the villages inhabited by this race of simple folk. Chanctonbury Ring, with its coronal of trees, belongs to the down parish of Washington. The scenery in this parish is extremely fine. In 1866 one of the rustics had the good fortune to turn up a vessel containing three thousand pennies, which must have lain in the ground ever since the battle of Hastings. They got among the villagers, and half a pint of coins would be sold for a quart of beer. Ditchling is the highest of the downs. In fine weather you may see the Isle of Wight and the Surrey hills. In this down village there was a Jew pedlar murdered, and his murderer was gibbeted here. On this down, as on various others, there are found the remains of a Roman camp. The parish extends five miles into the weald. A Jew pedlar was gibbeted in this parish, who went into a public-house and murdered the innkeeper, his wife, and his servant. It will be observed that the parishes on the north of the downs have narrow bases, and expand like the ribs of a fan. The object was that the church,

parsonage, and squire's mansion should have the shelter of the downs, and should be near one another for mutual aid and comfort. Findon is a very lovely 'down parish.' It has an unusual amount of underwood, furze, and juniper. Very near is Cissbury, with its famous earthworks. In fact the Romans seized all the heights for their earthworks, but probably enough the Britons had used them in the same way before. All this scenery reminds me of Aaron Hill's quaint phrase, 'wildly noble and irregularly amiable.' Firle is another of these Sussex down villages. It is called West Firle, but it is a matter of pleasing conjecture where any East Firle may happen to be. Pretty nearly the whole parish belongs to Lord Gage, and it is a peculiarly neat-looking village. Among some good pictures is one of a certain Dame Penelope Darcy, who had three lovers at once, who used to quarrel a great deal over her. She is reported to have pacified them by declaring that if they would only be patient she *would marry them all in their turns*, which she accordingly did. But I must guard myself against the pleasing subjects of the manor-houses and palaces of Sussex, which might well furnish room for a separate article.

Let me now say something of some secluded Sussex villages which I have lately visited, partly to revive old impressions or gain fresh ones, and partly having the friendly readers of this article in my mind's eye. It will only be an act of courtesy if we make the capital of the county our starting point, the cathedral city of Chichester. I do not discuss the local lions, such as they are, nor yet the lovely villages in the north, east, and west, nor yet the park and racecourse of Goodwood,

familiar enough to the thousands of Londoners who once a year make an immigration into Chichester, and turn the quiet little place topsy-turvy, almost frightening the Dean and Chapter out of their propriety. Let us go to Bosham, if only for the reason that no one ever goes there, except one or two sensible artists. *Murray*, who is particularly strong on the subject of Bosham, deters visitors by saying that the ride cannot be recommended on the score of beauty or interest. To my mind every high-road is dull, but one is not obliged to go by the high-road. I went along a lovely meadow path, and then through Mr. Baring's oak wood, and so through broad leafy lanes upon Bosham.

To archæologists the church is one of the most important in Sussex; but the place itself was to me as interesting as the church. The sea runs inland, forming a natural harbour of broad lake-like appearance. On the shore is a simple unsophisticated little fishing village. It is sometimes said that every available site for a watering-place in Sussex has been seized by the builders, and the whole coast is fringed by villas for lodgings. But here there are a simple fisher-folk, treading their even path from year to year, on weekday occupying their business in the great waters, and on Sunday going to their ancient famous church, beneath the dense masses of foliage, or proceeding up the avenue, which is so often a pleasing feature in the churches of this county. So lake-like is the harbour that one of the chief landed proprietors wanted to build a mole across it to reclaim part as land; but the attempt failed, which is hardly to be regretted. There is some shipbuilding in the harbour, but not of much size,

as the bar only draws some thirteen feet of water. The fishermen do not go so far as their Brighton brethren, who will be off to the Cornwall coast for pilchards, and on the eastern coast for herring fisheries. By the way, let it be said for the Brighton fishermen that they form the most genuine remains of ancient Brighthelmstone: a little liable, perhaps, to be spoilt by visitors, but still daring, industrious, and courageous, and affording a remarkable contrast to fashionable modern growths of every kind. These Bosham fishermen generally ply their fishing in mid-Channel or on the opposite coast of France. Sometimes they go ashore and fraternise with their Gallic neighbours, or may bring home ribbons and wines that may be innocent of paying tribute to her Majesty. Near the harbour are two fresh-water meres, which give good fishing in summer and good skating in winter. The shadowed path runs between the mere and the mill-stream, and brings you right in front of the famous venerable church, which is situated close to the shore of the creek or inlet known as Bosham Harbour. The erudite reader will hardly need to be reminded of the historical importance of this sheet of water. It was from Bosham Harbour that King Harold sailed on that ill-omened visit to William Duke of Normandy, which is immortalised in the pages of the late Lord Lytton and Mr. Freeman. He is represented with hawk on wrist entering the church, before sailing, to perform his devotions. The church is represented on the famous Bayeux tapestry, and the very first picture of that tapestry represents 'Harold and his Knights riding towards Bosham.'

It is said that Bishop Wilfred of York, in the time of the Vener-

able Bede, came down to the Sussex shore, and found at Bosham, encircled by woods and by the sea, a small religious house, which seemed a religious fortress in the midst of Saxon heathenness. This probably formed part of a college with some prebendal churches attached. Much of the present church is undoubtedly Saxon, and perhaps some of it is Roman. The chancel-arch and the tower are the joy and pride of Sussex archæologists. There was always a tradition that King Canute's daughter died here when visiting Earl Godwin, who had a castle in this place. This tradition had the usual lot of being discredited. But in 1865 the present vicar, Mr. Mitchell, discovered a stone coffin in a vault, containing the remains of a child about eight years old. Careful drawings of it have been made. We ought especially to remember the bells of Bosham, as famous in their way as the bells of Bottreaux. It is said that the Danes carried off the bells; but a storm arose ere the vessels were half-way down the creek, and the weight of the bells sank them in the water. There have been visionary people even at Bosham, who have imagined that in the evening breeze they have heard the tollings of the bells beneath the waters. I will only here mention that if the tourist will keep westward along the coast, he will come to the last village of Sussex, Westbourn, where there are also an arm of the sea, a fine church, and a fine avenue of yew-trees.

Midhurst will be a place full of special interest to many, owing to its associations with Mr. Cobden. In the recent *Life of Sir Joshua Walmesley* there are several of Cobden's letters from Midhurst. 'I am leading the life of a hermit here, entirely out of

the world, without any companions or acquaintances beyond my own family circle. We are in a thriving way; the children are as wild as young lambs in April . . . The two little pigs have duly reached us, and promise to be a good addition to our Sussex stock. Many thanks for them . . . We are rusticating in this quiet nook, to which I confess I become more and more attached—a proof, I suppose, of one's declining energies.' But he is still capable of bursting out into a little invective, as when he writes, 'That old desperado, Palmerston, is cheered on in his mad career by his turtle-fed audiences.' Many tourists go to Lavington to see the last home of honest Cobden.

Cowdray, near Midhurst, is eminently worth visiting. It is in the leafiest and most secluded part of Sussex. 'Sir,' said Dr. Johnson, when he visited Cowdray from Brighton, 'I should like to stay here twenty-four hours. We see how our ancestors lived.' Queen Elizabeth came here in one of her progresses. The Sunday breakfast on that occasion included, *inter alia*, three oxen and one hundred and forty geese. The tourist will not fail to notice the wonderful contrast between the downs and the weald—the bare simplicity of the downs, where, as Johnson said, you could not find a tree to hang yourself on, and the wealth of woods in the weald. The combination of the two is admirable, and the summer tourist is able to realise the legend beneath Poussin's famous picture, 'Et ego in Arcadia.'

Here let me trace out another very pleasant expedition. We go to Haywards Heath, almost the centre of the county, and a very convenient railway centre. Properly speaking, we are in the parish of St. Wilfred, St. Wilfred

being the great Sussex saint. A pleasant walk takes us to the pleasant village of Lindfield. You will notice the spacious common and the large ponds; the presence of so many makes up for the scanty riverage. It is the picture of a quiet Sussex village. There are some exquisite archæological bits in the neighbourhood. From Lindfield some delightful expeditions may be mapped out. You might go on to Horstead Keynes, rich in the literary associations of good Archbishop Leighton, who spent the last years of his life here, and the Rev. Giles Moore, who is the best of some half-dozen Sussex diarists, who have made up a quaint delicious literature of their own. Or you may go on to West Hoathley, where another and the quaintest of all the diarists lived. In any case, we go on past Pax Hill. I should here mention that there is a very interesting paper on Pax Hill and its neighbourhood in the eleventh volume of the *Sussex Archæological Collections*. Pax Hill, Mr. Sturdy's place, is now one of the most imposing houses in the country, and has received considerable additions since this paper was written. It marks a point in the history of Elizabethan household architecture, when, law and land being settled, the fortress character was abandoned, and the grand old Elizabethan mansion, with its vast hall and immense kitchens, became established. A great deal has been said about the fare of old days, romancists of the cheerful school representing the land as overflowing with milk and honey, while the archæologists contend that our forefathers had no fresh meat for more than half the year, but were compelled to have their beef and mutton salted like our present pork and bacon. But the English country house of

the old days, such as Pax Hill, had three great sources of feeding, which, at the present time, are almost disregarded, but which, as the resources of an increasing population become more severely taxed, might be advantageously revived. The country gentleman used to have his stews or fish-ponds. If he had not the fish of the deep sea to offer, he had tench, eels, and carp, which can be made into appetising dishes. He had his warrens, which gave him an unlimited supply of rabbits; and at the present day I have met people who have made little fortunes out of rabbit-warrens. Then he had his dovecot, or *columbarium*, which in Sussex was looked on as a great supply of food of a most agreeable character. The dovecot at Lewes had no less than 2500 cells for pigeons. The first inhabitants of Pax Hill were the great Sussex family of the Wilsons, from which comes the family of Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson, owning the delightful old country house of Old Charlton. The Wilson family were established in Yorkshire in the thirteenth century, and one of them, while still a layman, was made Dean of Durham. Pax Hill, I should say, is charmingly placed, and the noble interior has some of the finest carving in the county.

Our tourist will probably go on to Ardingley. In this and several other Sussex villages he may see one of the most important social and educational organisations. This is the corporation of the schools and societies of St. Mary and St. Nicholas, Lancing. Amid the secluded leafiness of Ardingley there rises a mass of school-buildings known as St. Saviour's, which will shortly give accommodation to one thousand boys. It is intended for the sons of poor gentlemen small farmers, mechanics,

and others of small means. The charge is only fifteen guineas a year for board and education. At Lancing there is a public school which may successfully vie with most of the great public schools. At Hurstpierpoint, which we visited just now, but at some distance from the village, is St. John's School, with the appearance of an Oxford or Cambridge college. *Murray* wisely recommends the tourist to see St. John's. The chapel is magnificent; and the whole building of the Gothic of Edward III.'s time. It would be possible to mention some half-dozen institutions which are affiliated to the Lancing corporation. It is not too much to say that there is a regular network of these schools all over the county of Sussex. The education is precisely that of the great public schools, with that degree of religious earnestness thrown in which has marked Eton since the days of Bishop Selwyn. In these high-priced days of education, such instruction would be absolutely unattainable, unless very large sums had been raised for building and starting the schools. There are some sporadic schools of the kind in other parts of the country, but Sussex is their home and peculiar domain.

Lastly, if one might take up another class of villages, I would mention the forest villages. Formerly Sussex was one huge forest, at least beneath the downs, and there are still large stretches of genuine forest, such as are not often to be seen in England. Continuing our journey from Ardingley, we turn aside to Rock-hurst, where amid a perfect wilderness we meet with an extraordinary group of rocks—not two or three, as most guide-books say, but some thirty or forty altogether. It is well worth a journey

from London to examine these vast rocks. The most curious stone of all is one called 'Big upon Little,' very like the Logan Rock in Cornwall, and not of inferior interest. The scenery of all this sandstone district is very well deserving of study. It is like the best part of the scenery around Tunbridge Wells. Worth Forest is part of that great Andreswood which once covered all Sussex north of the downs, the name most probably signifying 'the uninhabited region.' The tourist should make for Worth church, the centre of this fine woodland district, and on his way he had better get a glance at Sir Curtis Lawson's fine place at Rowfant. The exquisitely sylvan appearance of Worth church, with myriad trees dotted over the broad country, many of them oaks of a thousand years, is very charming. But the ecclesiologist knows that he is at one of the most interesting spots in England. It is said to be the only perfect specimen extant of the ground-plan of an Anglo-Saxon church—cruciform, with nave, transepts, chancel, and circular apse; the huge square-cut stones cemented with rubble, the stringcourse of stones carried all round the walls at half their height, bandings supposed to be imitated from the early wooden churches of the primeval forest. The church is perhaps the work of some Saxon earl, who, while hunting the forest for the 'wild deer,' also raised a house of prayer, where he and his huntsmen might worship God in the solitude of the woods.

Going eastward, we see the vast panorama of Ashdown Forest from the nobly-placed town of East Grinstead. Brambletye House—the station is Forest Row—is a place which is well known to the novel-readers of the last genera-

tion as being the title of Horace Smith's novel, one of the many novels based on the adventures of Charles II. and his return to England. It is by no means a bad novel of its kind, but there is extremely little local colour about it, hardly as much as Mr. Harrison Ainsworth's parallel story of *Ovingdean*. All that Horace Smith practically tells us is, 'Brambletye House stands upon the extreme borders of Ashdown Forest, in the county of Sussex. It came into the possession of the Comptons towards the beginning of the seventeenth century; and from the arms of that family impaling those of Spencer still remaining over the principal entrance, with the date 1631 in a lozenge, it is conjectured that the old moated edifice which had hitherto formed the residence of the proprietors was abandoned in the reign of James I. by Sir Henry Compton, who built the extensive and solid baronial mansion commonly known by the name of Brambletye House. This massive structure is now a mass of ivy-covered ruins, though two centuries have not elapsed since its first stone was laid; while the venerated moated house in the vicinity remains in probably little worse condition than when it was deserted by Sir Henry.' In Ashurst Forest there is a deep secluded dell, in which dwell some few dozen folks seven miles away from any church. Nothing in the course of this expedition pleased me so much as Sackville College, a foundation slenderly endowed, but a living memorial of past ages, and with all the quaint details faithfully preserved. The main modern feature is the chapel, a perfect little gem in its way, by Butterfield. The foundation maintains a warden, five brethren, and eleven sisters. I was informed that the brethren and sisters got only four-

teen pounds a year, and the warden a double allowance both of rooms and money—two rooms and twenty-eight pounds. He, however, is supposed to have the use of the fine old rooms called the Dorset Lodgings. In chapel and dining-hall, in old device, you are implored to ‘pray for the Lord Dorset, his ladie and his posterity.’ Mason Neale, writer and translator of hymns, gave the name of Sackville College a wide currency; and I was sorry not to find any memorial of him in the college which he served so faithfully and loved so much.

If we take the western forest villages, we cross to the other side of the London and Brighton Railway. Three Bridges is a well-known station. Once the river Mole was crossed here by three wooden bridges, which are now consolidated into a single strong bridge. The district called Tilgate Forest comes between Worth Forest and St. Leonards Forest. You should see Slaugham, where there are the ruins of a great house which once owned lands ‘from Southwark to the sea.’ We have here one of the biggest of the big Sussex ponds. St. Leonards Forest, extending over 11,000 acres, has still some considerable remains. Once it abounded in ‘wild boar, deer, grouse, hares, and other venerie.’ The great lords who farmed the woodless downs also claimed a share in the wooded weald. The two Sussex streams, the Arun and Adur, have their chief springs in the forest. Most of the timber was burned down for the ironworks; but there

are some 15,000 trees in the avenue called Mike Miles’ Race. The lagoons called ‘hammer-ponds’ belonged to the ironworks. The best way of getting at the forest is from Horsham, a very pleasant head-quarters for summer excursions.

I trust, benevolent reader, that I have given you some of my own enthusiasm for this gracious and beautiful county. I have in my time travelled hundreds of miles that have not at all been better worth investigating. And this scenery lies at the very door of the Londoner. It will, indeed, take him less time to go from London to the heart of Sussex than from one part of London to another. London has its own pleasant breathing-spaces, rich with lawn and flowers and timber, and its environment of greater beauty than any other European capital can boast. Pleasant also it is to run down to one or other of the Sussex watering-places, such as Brighton and Hastings. But it is possible, at a brief notice and within a brief while, to attain a still more thorough and invigorating change. It may involve some honest trudge, and may involve simpler fare and earlier hours than is our wont. But such journeys as I have indicated will bring us back to the simplest, most primitive rural life, will deepen our acquaintance with Nature, with unaltered forms of down and forest; and in many a byway, many a cottage and stately home, serve to bring us back in a measure to the England of the Stuarts, the Tudors, and the Plantagenets.

F. A.

TABLE D'HÔTE AND ÉCARTÉ.

AUGUST is invariably the gayest month of the season at Spa ; and in 18—, notwithstanding, or, as some moralists would have it, on account of, the recent suppression of the *trente et quarante* and *roulette*, the general aspect of that enchanting little watering-place was, if anything, livelier and more brilliant than usual. Every available corner in the different hotels was occupied ; while the owners of private apartments vegetated contentedly in garrets and out-houses, their principal topic of conversation among themselves being the relative importance of their respective lodgers, whose names and qualifications were duly chronicled in that estimable journal *La Saison de Spa*. In a word, from the fashionable locality of the Place Royale down to the tortuous and ill-paved streets of *le Vieux Spa*, every house or room proprietor was laying by a snug provision for the ensuing winter. Not a *cigale* was to be seen ; all were *fourmis*.

Naturally, a large proportion of the guests at the various *tables d'hôte* were English, and in this respect no hostelry was more extensively patronised than that presided over by the worthy Herr Müller, the Hôtel d'Orange. We will take advantage of the second bell, rung in the courtyard by a tall thin Oberkellner (for in this establishment the waiters are chiefly Teutons), to introduce the reader into the long but somewhat narrow dining-room, where most of the regular customers are already assembled ; the new-comers being successively installed in

their appointed seats by the aforementioned functionary. One of these, an important personage in our sketch, requires no physiognomist to indicate his nationality ; a more complete specimen of the untravelled Briton could not well be imagined ; and it is evident, from his imperfect comprehension of the polyglot phrases under cover of which the Oberkellner marshals him to his chair, and from the uneasy shyness with which he looks round the table as he unfolds his napkin, that he has some inward misgivings as to his being the right man in the right place. Immediately opposite him are a Spanish trio, husband, wife, and daughter, the former intently studying the wine-list, the two latter jabbering away with a guttural shrillness painfully suggestive of a bagpipe. The seats adjoining them are occupied by two antiquated dames, each armed with a ponderous eyeglass, and both absorbed in a critical inspection of the bill of fare. Near the head of the table sits enthroned a stout female of undoubted Israelite origin, her puffy features enlivened by a stereotyped grin ; she is flanked on either side by a lanky damsel, decorated with Spa-wood brooch and earrings from the Rue Royale, and an enormous chignon.

Slightly disheartened by the prospect before him, Mr. Algernon Jones, *rentier* (for as such he has described himself in the book at the porter's lodge), directs his attention to his right-hand neighbour, a showy yellow-haired lassie of eight-and-twenty or thereabouts, attired in a pea-green silk dress,

with a train, the extent of which is a perpetual grievance to the passing waiters. Awed rather than encouraged by this imposing apparition, and quailing beneath the concentrated stare of the old ladies opposite, who by this time have finished their soup, and, pending the arrival of the fish, are pleasantly engaged in taking down the stranger's points, he feebly glances at the two vacant chairs on his left hand, wonders why they are turned up, and is suddenly recalled to every-day life by the advent of a napkin-carrier, bearing in one hand a dish of haddocks, and in the other sundry hard and yellow potatoes apparently indigenous to Spa. Scarcely, however, has he had time to ascertain that the haddocks might have been fresher and the vegetables less indigestible, when the chair nearest his own is rapidly tilted down, the folds of some airy fabric brush softly against his arm, and he is conscious, like Leporello, of an *odor di femina*.

I am afraid that whatever pains Herr Müller's *chef* may have that day expended on the five-o'clock repast were but imperfectly appreciated by Mr. Jones, and that the salmon patties, nay even the superb *buisson d'écrevisses*, were successively disposed of by the insensible Englishman with an indifference that would have horrified Brillat-Savarin and driven Grimod de la Reynière into fits. But pardon him, ye erudite 'classics of the table:' he was young, and consequently a neophyte in gastronomy; nor—if further justification be needed—was his fair neighbour exactly the person to be passed over unnoticed by a susceptible enthusiast of two-and-twenty. She was a blonde of about thirty years of age, admirably proportioned, with a profusion of light-brown hair, and

dark-blue eyes, which were rendered still more expressive by a slight, very slight, artistic pencilling at each extremity; her dress was simple, but combining the nicest taste with the most becoming harmony of colour; every separate item, from her closely-fitting Swedish gloves down to her delicate *brodequins*, betokening not merely the Frenchwoman but the Parisienne, which indeed she was. Paying but scant attention to the stony glare of the two antediluvian eyeglass-holders, and none at all to the undisguised admiration of the Hidalgo opposite, she occasionally conversed in a low tone with her companion on the left, a young man apparently some three or four years her junior, scrupulously attired in the English fashion, but whose well-waxed moustache, sallow complexion, and listless *blasé* air proclaimed him an undoubted importation from the Boulevard de Gand.

Our friend Algernon meanwhile was in the seventh heaven. Once or twice in the course of dinner he had essayed, in the best French he could muster, an appropriate observation to his attractive neighbour respecting the delights of Spa (of which, by the way, as he had only arrived by the half-past four-o'clock train, his experience was perforce limited); and though it is uncertain whether his remarks were understood or even listened to, yet, as they were rewarded by a display of the whitest of teeth and the sweetest of smiles, he at least had no cause to complain. All things, however, have an end, and a *table-d'hôte* repast, long though it be, is no exception to the general rule. Before her Spanish *vis-à-vis* had exhausted his second bottle of Moselle, and while his womankind were still hard at work on unripe pears and

fossil-like biscuits, the lady whose appearance had excited so much commotion quietly rose from her seat, and, with a gentle inclination of her head towards Algernon, left the room, together with her companion.

'Awfully pretty woman!' soliloquised Mr. Jones half an hour later, as he sat sipping his coffee and smoking a cigarette in the garden behind the hotel; 'wonder who she is? Hope she will come again to-morrow.'

It may not be amiss here to inform our readers that the young gentleman, as yet imperfectly introduced to their notice, was the only son of Silas Jones, Esq., head of the well-known and opulent firm of Jones & Spoonbill, colonial merchants; and that his presence at Spa was simply prefatory to an intended sojourn at Frankfort, where, under the auspices of his father's correspondents, Messrs. Sauerkraut & Wurst, he was to be initiated in the mysteries of German book-keeping, previous to his reception as a junior partner in the paternal house of business. On the principle, however, that all roads lead to Rome, Master Algernon can hardly be blamed if he chose the longest, more particularly as an opportune legacy of a few hundred pounds from a deceased aunt had enabled him to begin his journey satisfactorily ballasted with a nest-egg, for the use or abuse of which he considered himself accountable to nobody. What, then, was more natural than that he should desire to see all that was to be seen on his way; and that, instead of exhibiting any undue impatience to make the acquaintance of Messrs. Sauerkraut & Wurst, he should have quietly transferred himself and effects from the main line at

Pepinster to the branch line conducting to Spa?

Although, after a week or two, the ordinary existence at this agreeable summer resort is apt to verge on the monotonous, yet for the first few days the visitor has plenty to do in exploring the environs of the 'happy valley.' Algernon, therefore, what with strolling along the Rue Royale, inspecting the specimens of wood-painting in the different shop-windows, tasting the Pouhon water, and finally making the circuit of the remoter springs in a diminutive basket-carriage drawn by two hardy little 'bidets,' contrived on the following day to while away the intervening hours destined to elapse before the five-o'clock bell should once more gratify him with a sight of his charmer. That blissful moment, however, at length arrived, and he found himself seated for the second time beside the fascinating Frenchwoman, who, accompanied by her attendant cavalier, and, if possible, more irresistibly dressed than on the preceding afternoon, sailed into the room at the very moment when her youthful admirer was in the act of dissecting a *sole au vin blanc*.

It must not be thought that Mr. Jones had previously omitted to ascertain the name and position in society of his captivating neighbour; by a judicious questioning of the Oberkellner he had learnt that she was described in the *Saison de Spa* as Madame la Baronne du Pré-Fleuri; that she occupied apartments in the town; and that the gentleman who sat next her was supposed to be her cousin. Thus enlightened, after ransacking his memory in the vain hope of recalling some pretty phrase expressive of his delight at her condescending to honour the

table d'hôte with her presence, he blurted out certain indistinct sounds, among which the word 'j'espère' alone was audible.

'Je les aime mieux en branches,' coolly replied the Baronne, who thought he was alluding to the *pointes d'asperges* which had just been handed round, and who was herself at that moment eyeing with intense amusement a white-cravated notary from Verviers eating peas with his knife at the farther end of the table. This unexpected answer puzzled our hero not a little; but he speedily returned to the charge, and by dint of superhuman efforts succeeded in making himself as agreeable to the fair lady as their mutual ignorance of each other's language would allow; and the ice being thus gradually broken, was graciously invited at the close of dinner to accompany herself and cousin to the restaurant Baas-Cogez, at the entrance of the Sept Heures promenade, for the purpose of taking coffee. As they emerged into the courtyard of the hotel, Madame la Baronne, turning to the young Frenchman,

'Vicomte,' said she, 'let me present you to Monsieur—'

'Jones,' suggested Algernon, with a polite bow.

'Monsieur Jones,—my cousin, the Vicomte Pons de Caradoc. The Vicomte,' she added, 'has been often in London, and is acquainted with English.'

'O yase,' assented the gentleman alluded to; 'I spik him perfectly well.'

'Bravo!' exclaimed the enchanted Jones, now quite at his ease, as the trio sallied forth into the street, and a few minutes later were comfortably seated in the immediate vicinity of the kiosque, where M. Guillaume's musicians were straggling in one after another, and tuning their instru-

ments preparatory to commencing Meyerbeer's overture to *Struensee*.

Time generally slips away rapidly enough, as long as its fleeting hours bring with them agreeable sensations and varied pleasures. A week had elapsed since the above-mentioned evening, and, in spite of more than one admonitory missive from Lothbury, Algernon was still at Spa, enjoying himself to his heart's content, and as heedless of the future as Hannibal at Capua. His acquaintance with the Baronne and her cousin had ripened into something very like intimacy, and not a day passed without some fresh excursion being planned, some hitherto unvisited site in the neighbourhood explored. Franchimont, the cascade of Coö, the picturesque village of Theux, had each in its turn been resorted to and admired; the restaurants of the Géronstère and the Barisart had been frequently laid under contribution; and on the occasion of the races at the Sauvenière the toilette of La Baronne du Pré-Fleuri had achieved, according to the local journals, one of the most brilliant triumphs of that memorable day. Moreover, Mr. Jones felt himself thoroughly at home with his new friends; a diligent and unremitting study of the classical beauties of *La Fille de Madame Angot* at the theatre had, as he conceived, greatly improved his French, and enabled him in some degree to appreciate the liveliness and *sans-gêne* which characterised the cosy little suppers organised after each performance in Madame's charming apartment overlooking the Place Royale. There the Vicomte would discourse on the delights of Paris life, and relate anecdote after anecdote, the point of which his uncivilised hearer was often at a loss to discover; there also the

Baronne would enlarge on the splendour and historical traditions of her château in Brittany, to which, we may be sure, she gave Mr. Jones a pressing invitation. Her manner, too, had become cordial in the extreme; the young Englishman was now clearly regarded by her as 'l'ami de la maison,' and he even fancied (as far as his innate timidity would permit him to harbour so ecstatic a thought) that she was not wholly indifferent to his very evident admiration. In any case, whatever may have been the lady's sentiments, there is no doubt that the future colonial merchant was hard hit, and that the object of his adoration was perfectly aware of the fact.

It was after one of these social *réunions*, while our hero and M. de Caradoc were indulging in a final cigar on the Place Royale, that the Vicomte incidentally asked Algernon if he had ever been to the casino; and on the latter's reply in the negative, proposed strolling in that evening to see what it was like.

'Why, it's not a ball-night, surely?' said Mr. Jones.

'No, no ball,' replied the other; 'but ze play-room is open—*écarté*, you know.'

'Écarté?' exclaimed the ingenuous youth. 'I was reckoned rather a dab at that.'

'Vot is dab?' inquired the puzzled Vicomte.

'I mean I was rather a good hand at it.'

'Ah, I see; ven you ave good hand you vin: dat is good joke. Vot you say, yase or no?'

'I'm agreeable,' said Algernon. 'Let us see if we can't take the shine out of these fellows.'

'All right,' said the Vicomte; and in they went.

Those who remember the an-

cient Redoute, formerly the headquarters of the bank superintended by M. Davelouis, will have little difficulty in recognising the locality of the present casino. It is, in fact, precisely the same building under a different name; minus, however, the boards of green cloth which until within the last few years constituted its chief attraction. Ballroom, reading-room, and cardroom are accessible on payment of a trifling entry; and it was towards the latter section of the establishment that our friends, after depositing the sum of one franc each with the janitor, directed their steps. On the evening in question the *salle de jeu* was but thinly peopled, some half a dozen bystanders at most surrounding a table, at which a game of *écarté* was going on. A few louis on either side were the only stakes visible, and behind each player stood one or more of his backers, ready to counsel him in case of necessity. As the Vicomte and Algernon entered, the dealer, who had already scored four, and who was no other than the Spaniard of the *table d'hôte*, turned up the king; whereupon his adversary instantly vacated his seat, and the stakes vanished as if by magic into the pockets of the winning punters. No new player appearing to oppose the conqueror, the latter looked round impatiently, and his eyes met those of our hero.

'Why,' exclaimed Algernon, 'that's the man who drank such a lot of Moselle! I say, Punch Carrydog' (his nearest approach to Pons de Caradoc), 'I've half a mind to have a shy!'

'Shy!' returned the Vicomte; 'nevair be shy, but go sit down, and I give you advices.'

So Mr. Jones sat down opposite the Spaniard, and placed a hundred-franc note as his individual venture

on the corner of the table appropriated to the stakes; his companion added another on his own account, and both were instantly covered by their opponent and the only other remaining spectator present. At the conclusion of the first deal Algernon just managed to score the odd trick; his second essay was not so fortunate, his *vis-à-vis* marking the king and the *volte*. It was now the Englishman's turn to deal; and a glance at his own hand showing him that he held the king and two small trumps, he, in spite of the Vicomte's urgent remonstrances, boldly refused his adversary's application for more cards, and requested him to play. Leading the queen of hearts, to which our hero's knave fell, the Spaniard followed it up with the ace of the same suit, which Algernon trumped; and after playing his king, had the mortification of finding the queen and ten of trumps arrayed against him, and of witnessing the immediate appropriation of the stakes by the winning party.

'Nevair mind,' whispered M. de Caradoc; 'I take your place, and ve get zem back, nevair fear.'

Hardly, however, had he sat down when, to the amazement of Mr. Jones, who had been engaged in extracting another note from his *porte-monnaie*, the Spaniard, after one penetrating glance at his new opponent, rose from his chair and walked away, accompanied by his backer.

The Vicomte's sallow face grew, if possible, a shade paler than usual, and his hands twitched nervously; but recovering himself in a moment, and humming rather tremulously,

'Perruque blonde et collet noir,'

'*Ma foi!*' said he, 'my poor Jones, ve nevair see ze ten louis no more. Say, shall we go, or,'

shuffling the cards as he spoke, 'it is yet airly—shall ve not first play von leetle game?'

Algernon, slightly excited by his preceding attempt, and anxious to retrieve his character as 'dab' at *écarté*, accepted the proposal with alacrity, and fresh cards having been obtained from the drowsy attendant, seated himself in the chair recently occupied by the Spaniard.

'Combiang?' said he, pulling out his note. 'Same stake as before, eh? Why, what's the matter now?'

Something evidently was the matter with the Vicomte, for he looked the picture of confusion, and his fingers shook like aspen-leaves. A tall and rather stout man had just sauntered into the room, and was surveying M. Pons de Caradoc with manifest attention. Presently the latter, with a muttered apology and some not very intelligible allusion to a 'pain in ze ead,' started from his seat, and, seizing in his hurry Mr. Jones's hat instead of his own, disappeared rapidly through the door leading to the staircase, followed closely by the mysterious stranger.

'Well!' soliloquised Algernon, on finding himself alone with the attendant, who had fallen asleep in a corner; 'well, of all the cool proceedings I ever heard of, this is about the coolest! Never saw a fellow in such a fright in my life! Owes the other man money, perhaps; didn't look like a tradesman, though.' (Here he gave a tremendous yawn.) 'Time to turn in, I fancy. Why, this isn't my hat; it's Punch's with the narrow brim! Won't I chaff him about it to-morrow, and won't the Baroness laugh when she hears the story!'

Early rising, a virtue much cultivated in Spa, was not, as a

general rule, one of Mr. Jones's weaknesses ; and on the morning subsequent to his visit to the casino the old church-clock was striking eleven as he put the finishing touch to his toilette, and descended to the breakfast-room. He had hardly taken his seat at one of the vacant tables, when he was mysteriously informed by the head-waiter that M. le Commissaire wished to see him.

'Commissioner!' exclaimed Algernon ; 'what about?'

'Not commissioner,' replied the Oberkellner, 'commissaire—Commissaire de Police. If Monsieur will step into the hall, he will find him there.'

The word 'police' rather startled our hero, and he felt half disposed to decline the interview. A moment's consideration, however, convinced him that he personally had nothing to fear ; so, rising from his chair, he followed the waiter into the adjoining lobby, by courtesy called the hall, where a tall individual was pacing up and down. It was the stranger of the preceding evening.

'Can I speak a few words to you, sir?' was his polite inquiry, couched in excellent English.

Algernon nodded.

'Then do me the favour to accompany me where we shall be undisturbed,' continued the Commissaire ; and leading the way through the breakfast-room, and thence through an open window in the reading-room, communicating with the garden, he motioned Algernon to a chair, and selected another for himself. Mr. Jones sat down, and wondered what was coming next.

'May I ask you,' began the stranger, 'how long you have been acquainted with the person who was with you last night, and who calls himself the Vicomte Pons de Caradoc?'

'O, ever so long—a week or more,' replied Algernon. 'Look here, this is his hat ; queer shape, isn't it?'

The Commissaire, quietly ignoring the hat, resumed his interrogatory in a graver tone.

'Have you ever played *écarté* with him before?'

'We never played together at all,' was the somewhat testy answer. 'We were just going to begin when you came in, and then he said something about a headache, and went home.'

'It is fortunate for you that I *did* come in,' remarked the other ; 'for a more consummate swindler than Jacques Pithoux never existed.'

'Jacques Pithoux!'

'Or, if you prefer it, the Baron von Schwarzwald, Count Massaroni, Sir Robinson ; they are all one and the same individual. However, you are not likely to meet him again ; for he left Spa this morning, together with his female accomplice.'

'What,' cried Algernon, 'you don't mean to say that the Baronne—'

'True,' replied the Commissaire ; 'I forgot she called herself Baronne here. She was Marquise last winter at Monte Carlo ; but her real name is Antoinette Duvair, and a very slippery customer she is, as I have reason to remember ; for I had occasion to examine her once when formerly attached to the Rue de Jérusalem in Paris. They were both expelled from Monaco a few months ago ; but they had not been idle during their stay there, and have no doubt been living like princes ever since, for they don't appear to have got into any scrape here. In Spa they were pretty safe as long as I was absent (for I only arrived from Brussels yesterday on a tour of inspection), as no

one else recognised them except a Spanish gentleman, who fancied he recollected Pithoux at Hom-burg some years back, but had never seen the woman. He it was who put me on the scent last night, and I soon knew my man, and he knew me. So I packed them off by the early train, and sent one of my men with them to see them across the frontier.'

'But,' said Algernon, who had listened to the foregoing details with breathless interest, 'if Punch—I mean Pithoux—wanted to swindle me, why didn't he try it on before?'

'Because, my good sir, you might have been on your guard against a stranger, whereas from a *friend* you would have suspected nothing.'

'That I certainly shouldn't. But I say,' continued he, 'if your casino is open to any fellow of that sort who chooses to pay a franc, it strikes me that you might as well have Mr. Davy What's-his-name and the *roulette* back again.'

'That,' replied the Commis-saire, with a smile, and savouring a pinch of snuff, 'it is not my province to discuss. I merely considered it my duty to enlighten you as to the character of the persons with whom you had lately come in contact, and to caution you, as a stranger, against promiscuous intimacies in future. This done, I have the honour of wishing you good-morning;' and with a ceremonious bow he retired, leaving Mr. Jones to breakfast with what appetite he might.

'Promiscuous intimacies, indeed!' muttered our hero, pushing away his untasted cutlet; 'I'll not give them a chance. I'll be on the move this very day, as soon as I have hunted up a decent hat. What an idiot I was,' he added, surveying with disgust the elegant *chapeau rond* which had recently ornamented the head of M. Jacques Pithoux, 'not to suspect a fellow who could sport such a disreputably narrow brim!'

A few hours later the train from Pepinster to Cologne counted among its passengers Mr. Algernon Jones, *en route* for Frankfort, where we will leave him safely installed in the hospitable *salle-à-manger* of the — Hotel. Our last accounts speak favourably of his progress in bookkeeping and German, especially the latter, his instructress being no other than Fräulein Löttchen Wurst, a flaxen-haired and highly sentimental damsel, whose charms, it is whispered, have already effaced from the memory of her susceptible pupil all recollection of the too fascinating Baronne. It is scarcely probable that, under these circumstances, he will have leisure to avail himself of that lady's invitation to her château in Brittany. Should he, however, at any future period be tempted thither, he will, we imagine, be in a position to enlighten the antiquarian world as to its absolute identity with—a *château en Espagne*.

C. H.

GENERAL UTILITY.

'WHERE gott'st thou that goose look?' 'Go prick thy face, thou lily-livered boy.' 'Take thy face hence.' 'Dull, unmindful villain, why stayest thou here?' 'Speak, slave!'

These and such like expressions I have been used to for many years; and use with us is second nature, for we talk about our thousands and flutter our crisp bank-notes as if they were old friends. I've seen the great tragedian take his 'paper' on Saturday, but I never got beyond a *small* pile of silver; there are three more mouths at home, but she (I mean my wife) makes the salary go to the end of the week very well.

It seems like a dream to look back on the time past and see the old man in his chair smoking his pipe and listening to the bit of news out of a paper more than a week old. Ah, he was opposed to anything theatrical 'tooth and nail;' wouldn't have seen me talking to a play-actor in case I might have caught the infection. Well, he didn't live to see me in the 'general utility' line; that's a shock he was spared.

There were no music-halls when I first started; if there had been I don't suppose I should have joined the travelling company. I had a tidy voice at that time, and if I could have got a good comic song written I should only have had to put on a ridiculous dress, then I might have stood a better chance. Why don't I do it now? Too late, sir; my salary, as I've said before, is not very great, and my wardrobe's not very flourishing,

but utility's my line, sir, 'general utility,' and I expect that I must go on making myself generally useful till the 'baize' falls.

I had a long apprenticeship in the country, pieces changed every night; that's the time to try your study. 'Practice makes perfect,' they say; but when you come to play about a dozen pieces a week there's no mistake about the practice, but as to being perfect you'd better ask the prompter.

Yet, mind you, there's a sort of charm about the 'uninterrupted chain of novelty' business (that's what they call it in the bills). Why? Well, I'll tell you. I've played in a piece for more than two hundred nights; I had to go on when it was nearly over and take a letter which caused a good deal of excitement to the leading man; and, when he asked me if 'The Lady Leonora had intrusted it to my care?' I had to reply 'She did, my lord.' 'There's for thy pains,' he said, and giving me the usual coin waved me off.

There, that was my part for two hundred and odd nights, and it almost knocked me over; but what annoyed me still more was that, after the run of this successful piece, the governor puts up *Pizarro* and *Rob Roy*, all the utility parts of which I knew backwards. If you'll believe me, in that year I hadn't the chance of studying half a dozen parts.

My wife was on the stage before we were married; but now, what with the children and looking to my collars and lace ruffles for 'ballroom scenes' and 'evening parties,' she'd hardly have the

time to study, even if I asked for the double engagement.

My eldest girl, somehow or other, took a liking to the boards very early; she'd been reading over my parts, and a few printed books of published plays that I picked up a bargain when poor Harry Collins, our second heavy-man, died; he only left an old father behind him, who soon melted Harry's little stock of 'props,' and the books came to me; but I was going to say about my girl Ellen (we always call her Nell at home), I never shall forget how pleased that child was when I came home one day from rehearsal and told her that old Burton, our stage-manager, was in a fix for a girl to play in *Belphegor*, and I said that I had come to take her to the theatre. She put on her bonnet, and I think she wanted to have a 'bus to the stage-door.

At rehearsal she read the part beautifully, and at night I stood as near the wing as a 'general utility' man is allowed, and I heard the governor say to the stage-manager, 'I say, Burton, that girl's playing that part remarkably well,' and so she did, for the woman at the pit told me the next night that she made the people cry in the second act; and, when I went home and told Nelly that, she laughed and drew herself up. 'Ah,' said she, 'we must have bills out next week, with our name in larger type, and we must speak about raise of salary.'

She has got on wonderfully since then; Lord bless you, she's in America now 'starring,' and writes home about dollars. Well, she's a good girl, though I say it, and industrious, for she's studied her profession and kept to it, from nigh the bottom of the ladder. I'm proud to say she never did go on without something to speak, not

that I've anything to say against the ballet; no, I've seen too many instances of hard-working girls taking home their little earnings to poor parents for that; there are exceptions I know, in this as well as in other professions, but maybe not quite so many.

I have been at the theatre where I am now for three years; but before that time I was out of an engagement sometimes for a month or two. I went one summer into the provinces, leaving my wife in our old lodgings with the younger children. I joined half a dozen others who were taking the very small theatres, and, as it was out of the season at the places we went to, the proprietor was glad to let us open, and take two-thirds of the receipts for his rent, printing, and gas. Well, we managed to live somehow.

I played Macbeth for my benefit; and when I came at night the woman who cleaned the stage gave me a letter, and when I opened it there was a sovereign fixed in a card, and a few words inside the envelope asking me to reserve the front row in the boxes.

You may guess that I was rather excited, for there was no name mentioned.

I dressed for the part; it was not such a bad make up, for I had seen some of the best on the stage; I won't say much about the dress. I remember I was not pleased with it after receiving the sovereign.

I came down to look through the curtain to see if there was any one in the house, and was surprised to see a good gallery and a very decent pit. I had not expected it, for there was a pony-race and jumping in sacks near the theatre; but as I found out that it had begun to rain, the presence of my patrons was easily explained.

Seven o'clock; prompter rang the bell; up went the curtain; the first and second scenes passed over. Scene third: enter Banquo followed by Macbeth; good reception for a utility man. I did not look at the audience, but closed my eyes as I bowed. I came down for my first soliloquy, and when I turned my eyes towards the centre, there was my Nelly with her mother and her sister Jessie sitting in the reserved seats—the mystery of the sovereign was revealed—and, strange to say, her presence seemed to give me more power. The good girl never laughed at me during the whole of the performance, and when I was killed and the curtain

fell she came round to me in the dressing-room, and said, as she gave me a kiss, 'You're a dear old bad actor, that you are.'

That was the only time I ever went beyond 'general utility,' and she often reminds me of it in her letters.

I don't often get a holiday; but even when I do I go down to the East-end and see a piece. I was vexed, though, about a month ago. I can hardly tell you the reason. I can't explain why it should trouble me; but the fact is, I wanted to go down to Stratford-on-Avon, but there was a misunderstanding between the governor and the committee, and our company didn't go down.

LONDON SOCIETY.

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MISS MONKTON'S MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE TAILOR'S SON.

THE glances bestowed by the two young men on each other were anything but friendly. Crosby got up, bowed stiffly to Humphrey, and stood with his arms folded and his head slightly bent. Humphrey stared, frowned, took the nearest chair, and sat flicking his boots with his riding-whip. He looked a fine broad-shouldered fellow, with a ruddy healthy colour from his ride in the cold. His first greeting of Sir George had been rather eager, with a sort of cordial respect in it; but a cloud immediately came over his face at the confused air of the two men who received him; for Sir George felt himself in a false position, and in consequence of this his manner was both awkward and dry. There was a minute of total silence.

'You did me the honour of saying that I might call on you to-day,' said Humphrey at last.

'I did,' answered Sir George.

Humphrey looked at him, and then at Crosby, with rising anger. What did Sir George mean by letting that insolent ass of an aide-de-camp stay in the room at

such an interview as this, when he was to have Letitia's answer? Well, whatever it meant, he could soon have his revenge.

'Should I offend you, sir,' he said, 'by asking for a few minutes of private conversation? We shall discuss our business better without a third person—if Captain Crosby will pardon the remark.'

As he spoke he gave Crosby a look which was quite insulting in its haughty dislike.

'Mr. Humphrey Barrett is under a slight mistake,' said Crosby quietly, though his eyes flashed. 'Would it not be best, sir, that he should know the whole truth?'

'No quarrelling, gentlemen,' said Sir George, 'or I shall know how to settle the affair at once, without regard to either of you. Now we had better talk this over in a friendly spirit. Since I saw you yesterday, Mr. Barrett, I have made a discovery—not altogether a pleasant one to you or to me. You have done me the honour to make proposals for my daughter. I have to tell you that she does not receive them very favourably; and I find that the reason of this is an attachment between her and Captain Crosby.'

'An acquaintance of three days!' said Humphrey, colouring crimson, with an attempt at a smile. 'Let me offer my congratulations, Sir George. Your son-in-law would be an ornament to any family. Pity his own is not more worthy of him—and of such a marriage.'

'Sir!' exclaimed Crosby, with a sudden step forward.

Humphrey got up, and turned towards the door. He was smiling more, while Crosby looked furious.

'You will answer this insult to me,' said the young officer.

'By no means,' said Humphrey. 'I only fight with gentlemen.'

Sir George listened to this outburst with consternation in his face.

Just then there was a little noise in the hall outside.

'I will, then. You may come too if you like,' said Letitia; and she opened the library-door, and walked in, followed with some hesitation by Mrs. Bushe, flushed and tearful.

Everybody was silent when she came in. Crosby's face softened; Humphrey's smile died away, and a look of deep anger and disappointment succeeded it. Sir George came forward, took his daughter's hand, and held it with unusual kindness of manner.

'Are these gentlemen quarrelling, papa?' said Letitia, looking round with her bright blue eyes.

'Do you think yourself a small treasure, to be given up without a word?' said Humphrey, with such fierce meaning in his eyes as they met hers that she was obliged to look away. The shrinking dislike, so evident in her manner, brought a sudden look of rage into his face.

Then Captain Crosby came forward gravely, and said,

'In the presence of these ladies,

sir, will you be good enough to explain your words just now?'

'What is all this?' said Letitia, again speaking to her father.

'Mr. Barrett has implied that Captain Crosby is not by birth a gentleman,' replied Sir George very dryly. 'I myself should be glad to know what he means—Crosby knows why. These things should be clear and above board. I hate mysteries.'

'But you told me yourself that he was a gentleman. And certainly no one need ask,' said Letitia, in her clear voice.

Crosby bowed his thanks.

'I had every reason to think so; but there seems some difficulty in the way of his giving an account of himself,' said Sir George.

'Why don't you tell papa all about it?' said Letitia. 'I—we all want to know—' and then she blushed and stopped suddenly.

'Can I ask you to trust me so far as to remain in ignorance of my true birth a little longer, without any change in your opinion of me?' said Crosby, looking at her earnestly.

'As long as you please,' answered Letitia. 'Say so too, papa. He has some good reason.'

'There you are right, Miss Monkton. He has a very good reason,' said Humphrey.

'Then pray tell us what it is,' said Letitia, quite ready in her lover's defence to look him fearlessly in the face.

'Yes; for Heaven's sake let us know what you mean!' said Crosby.

His proud bearing as he stood there not far from Letitia would not have suggested that he had anything to be ashamed of. Mrs. Bushe, who had been feeling very anxious, saw it with pleasure, and remembered the mysterious things he had said the day before. Perhaps he was a prince in disguise

—but who? On the whole, for dear Letitia's sake, considering the Royal Marriage Act, she hoped not.

Humphrey Barrett looked slowly round at them all, and the unpleasant smile curled his lips again as he said,

'Well, you bear me witness that I am asked to say what I know. If Captain Crosby had been more courteous I might have kept it to myself; but 'tis the kindest thing, after all, to open Sir George's eyes. He may brave it out as he likes, standing there, but I have it on good authority. His father lives in Cork; he is old Mat Crosby the tailor. Everybody in the south of Ireland knows him well.'

This announcement had its differing effect on the group that stood round. Mrs. Bushe turned pale and caught her breath with a horrified gasp. Sir George frowned, became extremely red, dropped his daughter's hand, and turned to look at Crosby. Letitia began to laugh. As for Crosby, a sort of spasm passed over his face; what it meant nobody could say for certain, but to Sir George it was as good as a confession. Especially as, after one glance at Letitia, he made no attempt to contradict Humphrey, but stood grave and silent, as if waiting for somebody else to speak. Humphrey's face slowly brightened and became triumphant, as Sir George's darkened more and more.

'If this is believed,' he said to Crosby, 'you have only yourself to thank for it. Your authority, Mr. Barrett?'

'A man who was his servant till lately—Roger Vance.'

'The fellow he turned off,' said Sir George. 'There is something queer about this affair altogether. Crosby, I have liked you, as you know. If you will at once tell

us frankly who you are, I will believe your word against Roger Vance's.'

'I thank you, Sir George,' said Crosby, with the faintest smile. 'I have already asked you to trust me. I told you that I could not say anything about my family at present. I can only repeat what I said then.'

'You will not even say that the fellow's story is a lie?'

'I decline to enter any further into the subject.'

Mrs. Bushe sighed. Letitia was listening almost breathlessly. Sir George looked completely puzzled for a moment, and then burst into a rage.

'Then you are the son of this tailor, sir! And for all this time past you have acted a lie, have pushed yourself into the society of gentlemen, have wormed your way into my confidence! Do you suppose I should have made a tailor's son my aide-de-camp, have invited him to my house, and then to be subjected to such unheard-of insolence?'

'I can bear a good deal from you, sir,' said Crosby. 'But if an honest tailor's son has wit enough to pass for a gentleman, I do not see why he should be so heavily handicapped. In the English army the way is open to merit, and you cannot say that I have not done my duty as an officer.'

'It is perfectly impossible!' said Mrs. Bushe, no longer able to contain herself. 'Look at him, Sir George. A tailor's son!'

Crosby's elegance and distinction, as he stood there so calmly in the midst of the storm, were perhaps more likely to influence women than men. But Sir George himself could not look at him without feeling of some sort.

'Come now, Crosby,' he said, 'I hate all this tragical nonsense.'

Tell me in plain words that you are not this tailor's son, and I'll believe you. I will, upon my honour.'

Crosby looked at Sir George for a moment, and then turned towards Letitia.

'What do you wish me to do?' he said. 'I have very urgent reasons for not answering any question whatever about myself at present; still, if I am to lose you by my silence, these reasons must of course give way. I only care for your opinion. Does my being called a tailor's son make any difference to you?'

'Difference, sir!' broke in Sir George. 'It makes this difference, that you will never see or speak to my daughter again. Leave the room, Letitia.'

'Directly, papa,' said Letitia. She was quite pale, but she looked so resolute, as she walked across to where Crosby was standing, that nobody moved a finger to stop her. She stood still before him, and put both her hands into his.

'Don't answer any questions for me,' she said. 'I do not care who your father is. It will never make the smallest difference to me.'

For a minute there was a dead silence. Crosby looked down into the true sweet eyes that were raised to his, and very gently and reverently kissed her hand. Then Letitia walked out of the room, and Mrs. Bushe followed her.

'You will oblige me, Captain Crosby,' said Sir George, in his driest and coldest manner, 'by leaving this house at your earliest convenience, and by keeping up no sort of communication with me or any member of my family.'

Crosby bowed, and left the room without making any answer.

Then Sir George went up to Humphrey Barrett, who had been watching this scene with a mixture of rage and satisfaction, and shook him very kindly by the hand.

'These family troubles are awkward things,' he said. 'Come and see us again soon. I hope your next visit will be a pleasanter one.'

'Is there any hope of that, sir?' said Humphrey, in a downcast way.

'Of course. I shall settle that for you. I am master in my own family,' said Sir George.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WEDDING-GOWN.

THE following days were days of great unhappiness to Letitia and Mrs. Bushe. Sir George, perhaps embittered by his disappointment in Crosby, became quite unbearably tyrannical. He went so far as to vow that before he went back to town Letitia should be married to Humphrey Barrett. Letitia, losing something of her brave spirit since Crosby had disappeared and nothing more was heard of him, spent most of her time in tears, which did not soften Sir George at all, and spoiled her eyes and complexion sadly.

About three weeks had passed in this disagreeable way, and Letitia was getting tired of crying, and beginning to wonder whether Crosby had forgotten her, when one evening things came to a crisis.

The weather had changed and grown warmer; the snow had all melted away by degrees, and everything was enjoying itself under soft blue sky and sunlight; there was a sweet smell of spring

in the wind that blew freshly across the green meadows and lanes.

Mrs. Barrett and her daughters took advantage of this fine weather to walk down one day in thick boots and warm shawls from the Castle, and pay a visit to Letitia. The young lady appeared, after a good deal of persuasion from Mrs. Bushe, and even her stony heart was melted a little by their extreme friendliness. The girls looked so simple and good; Mrs. Barrett talked in a sensible downright kindly way, and did not mention Humphrey's name. Letitia was obliged to be polite, for, after all, Mrs. Barrett's dance was a pleasant recollection; her spirits were elastic, and she was a little tired and even ashamed of crying so much. When they went away, however, Mrs. Barrett lost her advantage by kissing Letitia, and saying with oppressive motherliness, 'My dear, we are very happy. We are all so fond of you.'

Letitia did not quite see the meaning of this, for it had never entered into her head, whatever her father might say, that she was to marry Humphrey whether she liked it or not. She thought Mrs. Barrett was a stupid woman, but submitted to be kissed in silence. The girls seemed half inclined to follow their mother's example; but Letitia held out her hand in a way that admitted of no question at all; she had no notion of being on such terms with the whole Barrett family. Mrs. Bushe looked on in melancholy silence; her spirits had become lower in these last few days, as Letitia's had risen a little. Some awful secret seemed to be weighing on her mind.

When Letitia went up-stairs to dress for dinner she was surprised to find Florinda in her room, con-

sulting with her maid and a London workwoman over endless yards of white satin and a large box full of feathers and flowers. Florinda looked round with startled eyes at the girl as she came in; she had not expected her quite so soon. Letitia stared at these preparations.

'What is all that? A new gown of yours?' she said to her cousin.

'Have you seen your papa, my dear, since our visitors went?' said Mrs. Bushe.

'No; how should I?' answered Letitia.

After several stormy interviews with his daughter, Sir George had ended by leaving her to herself, and as far as possible ignoring her existence; for the last week they had scarcely exchanged a word.

'He had something to tell you—I thought he would have told you,' said Mrs. Bushe, rather confused.

'I have not seen him. What beautiful satin! It looks like somebody's wedding-gown.'

Letitia took hold of the satin and shook it out on the floor, holding it against her own pretty figure. 'There, Atkins, pick up my train. Don't you see I'm going to Court?' she said, laughing, to the maid.

'Miss Monkton will look beautiful, ma'am,' said the workwoman, a person they often employed, turning to Mrs. Bushe for sympathy.

But in Florinda's face there was nothing but the deepest sadness.

'Mrs. Bushe hates these vanities,' said Letitia. 'You will be splendid for once, though, cousin Florinda. What a pity you did not get it in time for that ball!'

'Come into your room, dear child. I must speak to you,' said Mrs. Bushe. 'Do not mind these

things now, Atkins; we will see them another time. I will ring when I want you.'

'Well, what is the matter? Anything new?' said Letitia.

There was a straight hard little sofa at the foot of the bed, on which Mrs. Bushe sat down, while the girl stood in front of her.

'O Letitia,' said Mrs. Bushe, 'your father is very cruel. It is wrong of me to say it, I know, but I must. Is it possible that you are still the only one in this house, or even in this neighbourhood, who does not know what is to happen next Thursday?'

In days long after, when Letitia told the story of her life, she never could remember that moment without shivering. It was so cold, so sudden, the feeling of absolute loneliness, and then the almost passion of self-reliance which followed it. She was never the same again; that evening ended her childhood. It was a woman, cruelly hurt, but not in the least subdued, that stood before Mrs. Bushe and gazed at her silently. Florinda was by far the most agitated of the two. She had expected a stormy scene with Letitia, but this stoniness was much more dreadful.

'My dear,' she said, 'sit down here. Speak to me!'

'I cannot conceive what you mean,' said Letitia quietly. 'You are talking riddles, and I hate them as much as papa does. What is to happen next Thursday?'

'O Letitia, you are so unlike yourself!' said Mrs. Bushe, beginning to cry.

'For Heaven's sake don't do that! Be reasonable,' said Letitia. 'I ask you a simple question; but I can answer it myself, for I understand now. You and papa are wonderful people indeed. Next Thursday is my wedding-

day, when you mean to marry me to Humphrey Barrett. Everybody is charmed, with one exception; and that fine satin gown is expected to keep *her* quiet. Very clever indeed.'

'Letitia, you will break my heart!' sighed Mrs. Bushe.

'You are doing your best to break mine; but fortunately it is not so fragile.'

'What could I do? I was forced to obey Sir George. I thought he would have told you himself before this.'

'I should like to understand the why and the wherefore of it all,' said Letitia coolly.

'Your papa thought that if you found everything was finally settled with the Barretts, you would be more likely to submit quietly,' said Mrs. Bushe. 'He is going abroad again very soon, and he thought, considering all the circumstances, it would be best to leave you safely married. They are really very good people, and admire you so much.'

Florinda spoke faintly and wistfully. Letitia listened with her eyes on the ground. There were no tears, no exclamations; she did not even change colour. After a little pause she turned away from her cousin, and walked up to the table.

'We shall be late for dinner,' she said. 'You had better go and dress.'

Florinda left her silently. This new mood of Letitia's, the cold indifference of her manner, was harder to bear than anything that had gone before. She longed to put her arms round the girl, to weep with her, to comfort her, to be reproached and scolded, if only she might give her love and sympathy. If there had been any wild despair in Letitia's manner, such as she had read of in romances, she would have been

frightened. There was none, and yet she was frightened.

What made it still stranger and more unnatural was, that Letitia talked all through dinner to Sir George with a pleasantness which astonished him. She had lately taken some interest in poultry, had been feeding the chickens and the ducks herself, and she wanted to know something about foreign fowls—how they were managed and fed, and what were the best breeds. Sir George knew nothing, but tried to say something. He also was uncomfortably conscious of the change in Letitia—that she had grown up in this one afternoon, that her heart was no longer in her face. He wondered what it meant. After dinner, when Mrs. Bushe got up to go into the drawing-room, Letitia remained a moment standing, with her hands on the back of her chair, facing her father as he walked across to the door.

‘Papa,’ she said, while both Sir George and Florinda hesitated between the table and the door, ‘I have to thank you for my beautiful wedding-gown.’

Sir George tried to speak and to smile, stammered frightfully, and grunted out,

‘Glad you are pleased with it.’

‘I should have liked longer notice,’ said Letitia, with a coolness which struck Mrs. Bushe as quite awful. ‘But I suppose it was not convenient to you. There is one thing I must ask, however.’

‘What is it? Anything I can do—’ said Sir George, beginning to feel great relief and pride in the success of his plan.

‘I think you forget how little I know of Mr. Humphrey Barrett. We really ought to make more acquaintance. I wish you would ask him to dine with us to-morrow.’

‘With the greatest pleasure,

Letty. My dear girl, you little know how gratified I am,’ said Sir George earnestly. ‘Now mind, you must ask me for anything you want—anything that money can buy. No reward can be too great for dutifulness.’

He came forward, as if he meant to kiss his daughter; but she did not seem to see this, and went quietly out of the room after her cousin. Sir George, very much pleased, sat down to finish his port. It was evident that he, at least, knew how to manage a refractory young woman.

Presently Mrs. Bushe opened the door softly, came in, and sat down near him a little way from the table. Sir George looked up, and wondered what was the matter with her. He did not quite see why Florinda should choose to put on such a solemn face when everything was going well, when Letitia had made up her mind to submit, and had lifted such a weight of anxiety off her friends’ shoulders.

‘You don’t look well, Florinda,’ said Sir George amiably. ‘You took nothing at dinner. Let me give you a glass of port.’

Florinda thanked him, and declined this decidedly.

‘I am obliged to you,’ she said; ‘I am perfectly well.’

‘Ah, glad to hear it,’ said Sir George. ‘Well, is it some clever management of yours that has brought Letty to her senses? I give you great credit. I am most agreeably surprised.’

‘O, I don’t want you to deceive yourself,’ said Mrs. Bushe, her voice trembling. ‘I am in great alarm about Letitia. She saw the white satin gown, and I was obliged to break it to her suddenly. I never saw anything so extraordinary as her manner. She is not submissive, Sir George. She is in despair.’

'Despair! absurdity! Does it look like despair, begging me to ask Barrett to dinner? You are too sensitive and fanciful, Florinda, to understand a girl of Letty's character. She has a great power of accommodating herself to circumstances, of making up her mind strongly on any one point. She inherits it from me. A power of self-conquest, in which you may, perhaps, be rather deficient. No reproach to you. It belongs to the natural character. Letitia is only behaving as I confidently expected her to behave. She has been too much indulged. As soon as she finds that I am seriously in earnest, she submits with a good grace. Despair! you have been reading too many novels.'

Florinda had a dim idea that she could not trust her own senses, and therefore she quietly accepted Sir George's contradictions. First he was agreeably surprised; then it was what he had confidently expected. After all, it did not matter much what his feelings were. She sighed and got up.

'I can only tell you my impressions,' she said. 'Letitia's manner to me is a new thing. She is reserved, cold, abrupt. She sits buried in thought, or talks in a strained unnatural way. She is not herself. I believe that if by any means she can escape this marriage, she will. And I must say, Sir George, at the risk of offending you, that in my opinion, by forcing her into it, you are doing a great cruelty to your only child.'

'My esteem for you is very great,' Sir George replied gravely. 'But on this subject we differ, and must continue to do so. I am satisfied with my arrangements for Letitia, and with her acceptance of them. At present I desire to look no further.'

He had his hand on the handle of the door, ready to open it.

'I wonder where Captain Crosby is,' said Mrs. Bushe.

'Why should you vex me by mentioning his name?'

'I do not believe a word of that story about his birth.'

'He may not be a tailor's son,' said Sir George, 'but he is an adventurer of some kind, of course. Otherwise he would have made no mystery about his family. Cannot you understand, Florinda, what I explained to you the other day—that it is specially to save Letitia from any consequences of an absurd fancy for him, that I have hastened on this marriage? A year or two hence you will do me justice. You will not talk of my cruelty, but of my wisdom.'

Sir George bowed his cousin out of the room and went back to his port, very much satisfied with himself. He was glad he had kept his temper with poor Florinda, provoking as she might be; of course all she said was dictated by sincere affection for Letitia and himself. Still the rôle of Cassandra was a very tiresome one, and he wondered she had not the tact and good sense to avoid it.

CHAPTER IX.

A FORLORN HOPE.

LETITIA began the next day by being measured for her satin gown. She went through this without showing much interest; but also without any appearance of disgust. Afterwards she put on her red cloak and went out to feed the chickens.

There was a large paved yard behind the house, with stables and coach-houses and dog-kennels all round, and a wooden granary in the middle, built on posts

several feet above the ground. On the steep steps of this granary Letitia stood with her bag of grain, and at the sound of her voice the feathered creatures ran and flew from every corner of the place. White pigeons came fluttering down from the roofs and chimneys, and perched about her; cocks strutted, hens cackled and quarrelled; the little lady was in the midst of a noisy greedy crowd, over which she poured showers of yellow grain. While she was doing this the yard-gate opened, and a tall young woman came in with a basket of eggs on her arm. She half paused at the sight of Letitia, standing there in the sun. Then she curtsied and came towards her, stepping carefully among the chickens.

Miss Monkton looked rather curiously at her bright rosy face, at the clear dark eyes which were watching her so anxiously, and glancing round now and then as she came, as if to make sure that there was nobody within sight or hearing. All the doors were shut; the men were busy or away; only one old dog looked out of his kennel, wagged his tail, and went back again.

'Pray, ma'am, do you remember me?' said the young woman with the eggs, standing at the foot of the steps, and dropping another curtsy.

There was no peasant shyness in her manner, but the well-bred fearless ease of a yeoman's daughter. She was well dressed too, and carried her basket gracefully. And there was a kindliness in her smile which made Letitia smile too as she answered her,

'I am sure I have seen you before.'

'I have brought eggs and butter to the house many a time. I've got some eggs here now; but I came to-day on purpose to see

you, ma'am. I am Kitty Pratt, of Jack's Croft.'

'Can I do anything for you?' said Letitia.

'Will you kindly read this, ma'am, and give me an answer to take back?'

A small sealed note appeared from under the folds of Kitty's shawl. Letitia felt almost dizzy as she took it; the writing was familiar to her. She turned away to read it. Kitty quietly set down her basket, took the bag of grain, and went on feeding the impatient fowls.

'The bearer of this can be trusted. Will you send me word by her whether the terrible report I hear is true? I am not far from you, but dare not compromise you by appearing. Tell me that if it is true, it is against your will, and it shall never happen.'

Letitia read this three or four times over. Then she turned quite calmly to Kitty Pratt.

'This note tells me you are to be trusted,' she said.

Kitty's eyes met hers with a smile that was nothing but truth.

'I see you are,' said Letitia. 'The gentleman who sent it, is he at your house?'

'Yes,' said Kitty. 'He came two days ago, and asked my father to take him in. He wished to be in this neighbourhood without any one knowing. He has not told us his name. We call him the Captain.'

'Tell him to wait till to-morrow,' said Letitia. 'He shall have an answer to-morrow, do you understand? Tell him there is one chance to be tried; but it may fail. Will you remember that?'

Kitty nodded.

'Have not you butter or eggs, or something to bring here to-morrow?'

'I could bring two pound of

butter, if Mrs. Bushe liked to order it.'

'I order it. Bring it to the house about this time to-morrow, and, as you go back, look for me outside the gates, under the trees yonder: you can carry my answer. Thank you. Now take your eggs to the house.'

Kitty curtsied and went, without another word.

All that day Letitia was a great trial to her affectionate cousin. When she answered or spoke to her, there was a studied carelessness in her manner, an abruptness that was almost rude, and quite silenced gentle Mrs. Bushe. She also felt that the girl avoided her as much as possible.

Towards evening Letitia seemed a little excited; her cheeks were very pink, and her eyes brighter than usual. She did not put on one of her prettiest gowns to receive young Barrett; but in spite of that, Mrs. Bushe thought she had seldom looked prettier. It was a painful prettiness, though, to any one who knew Letitia well. As to Humphrey, his position seemed quite to puzzle him. He was rather grave and silent all through dinner, though Sir George did his best to draw him out. Certainly no stranger, looking in upon them, would have guessed that the two young people were to be married to each other in a week. They sat on opposite sides of the table, and hardly exchanged a word.

After dinner, in the drawing-room, Letitia said to Mrs. Bushe,

'Will you do me one more favour?'

'One more, my dear?' said Florinda wonderingly.

'Will you let me be alone with Humphrey, when he comes in? Pray don't hesitate. It is the only chance of our understanding each other, and I suppose you think that desirable.'

'O Letitia, you puzzle me completely. If you knew what I feel!' sighed Florinda.

Letitia smiled coldly.

'My dear, do you hate this man?'

'What a strange question! Hate him! O no, I am not so uncharitable. All men are our brothers, you know, so it would be wicked to hate one of them. But don't look agonised, for I really have seen him much worse than he is to-night. The idea of marrying me seems to have tamed him; he is quite awed and downcast. I shall have to tell him not to be afraid of me.'

'Letitia,' said Mrs. Bushe very gravely, 'this whole business distresses me more than I can say. But to hear you speak in this terrible, unnatural, almost unwomanly way, is the worst part of it all. I will go, for I cannot bear to be with you. Why did you not say at once to your father that you would not and could not marry this man?'

'Papa has a bad ally in you, cousin Florinda,' answered Letitia quietly. 'And it is the last thing I should have expected of you, to advise disobedience. But when one is driven to the end of one's resources, and is without friends or help, one must fight people with their own weapons. A hateful thing to do, but sometimes the only thing. You must hope, now, that Humphrey Barrett and I may agree.'

'I don't in the least understand you,' said Mrs. Bushe. 'I think I shall go mad, if I talk to you any longer.'

'Then pray go and rest in your own room,' said Letitia.

Mrs. Bushe went. Letitia walked restlessly up and down the room till she heard the distant opening of a door, and a heavy step coming along the hall. Then

she sat down by the fire with a screen in her hand, to receive Humphrey.

He was rather startled by finding her alone. All his bullying self-assertion seemed to have left him; he was tamed, as she said, by this swift and strange realisation of his wishes. He drew a chair near her, sat down, and looked at her. Letitia glanced at him over her screen, and said the evening was rather cold.

'Is it? I have not felt it so,' said Humphrey.

Then they were both silent for a minute or two. Humphrey was angry with himself for being such an ass as to have nothing to say to this lovely girl, who had actually consented to be his wife—so her father assured him; but even to his dim perceptions she was wrapped in an icy mist, beyond his power of penetrating. At last, rather bluntly, he put some of his thoughts into words.

'Is it not strange to think what will have happened, this time next week! Can you imagine it at all? I can't.'

'O, perfectly,' said Letitia; 'I have heard so much about it, to-day and yesterday.'

'Well, I'm very glad to hear that,' said Humphrey. 'I really was in despair; and you don't know what it is to me to have it all settled like this. My people admire you, and all that, as much as I do. We none of us thought that you would ever bring your mind to it; but you shall never regret it, I promise you that.'

Heavens! what sort of love-making was this! Even in her desperate position Letitia felt as if she must laugh. She did smile, and this had the effect of cheering and emboldening Humphrey.

'Letitia—I don't know a prettier name,' he said. 'I've been

told that it means "joy," and if so it suits you well. One never could be dismal with you.'

'I am glad you think so,' said Letitia, 'though I am afraid you are mistaken. I wish I knew you a little better, Mr. Barrett.'

'Well, you will soon do that. But call me Humphrey, if you please,' said the young squire, pulling his chair a little nearer.

Letitia, however, did not look encouraging, and this was his furthest advance.

'I want to tell you something, and to ask you something,' she said, 'and I wish I knew how you are likely to answer me.'

'How do you think, now?'

'Kindly and generously, I hope,' said Letitia, in a low voice.

'I'm glad you do me so much justice,' said Humphrey. 'Always be true and open with me; you will find it your best policy. You don't understand what I feel for you, I see that. Come, then, try how far you can trust an Englishman.'

Letitia changed colour slightly at this last word.

'You know,' she said, 'that all this arrangement for next week was made by papa without any knowledge or consent of mine. I only heard of it when everything was finally settled. I might have made a great fuss, but I am tired—I have had trouble and vexation enough lately, and I thought that my best way was to speak to you.'

'We have all had vexation enough, and from the same cause,' said Humphrey, as she stopped for a moment.

'Then you understand me. I have only to tell you that I meant what I said that day. It is dreadful for me to say this to you, but this treatment has driven me to forget that I am a young girl. Nobody will tell you if I don't.'

Letitia turned her face towards

him. All the pretty colour had been driven from it by strong feeling; she was white and like a statue, except her deep blue eyes. But all the sweetness was gone from them; they gazed at Humphrey with a sad wild sternness. Most men would have felt a little nervous at the idea of marrying the owner of them. Humphrey scowled jealously, as he had so often done before.

'What! you are still thinking about that impostor fellow?'

'Wait; you have not heard all yet,' said Letitia hastily. She felt that in another minute or two it would be impossible to speak to him.

She got up, and Humphrey did the same; they stood two or three yards apart in front of the fire.

'I want to appeal to you,' Letitia said. 'If you are kind and generous, I must tell you what you will do now. It is for your own advantage as well as mine. Do you want to marry a woman who will make your life miserable?'

'I certainly shall not do that,' said Humphrey.

'Ah, well, if you wish to avoid it, you will set me free. Tell papa we have agreed that we don't understand each other, that we could never make each other happy. I will tell him so too. Let me go.'

'Here is a fine position for a man,' said Humphrey—'to be thrown aside like an old glove, because of a mad fancy for a fellow no better than an Irish beggar! I'll wager anything you like you will never see or hear of him again. He has played his game and lost it.'

'Perhaps I never may see him again,' said Letitia. 'That has nothing to do with what I ask you: will you release me from

this engagement, that was made without my knowledge?'

'Now I call that asking too much,' said Humphrey. 'All my friends know I am going to be married; I've asked them to the wedding. My father has made law arrangements for me—everything has been settled. A fine fool I should look if it was broken off now. And you can't ask it—you can't expect it; I who have loved you so long and so faithfully, and was so happy at the thoughts of your having given in at last. Sir George so pleased too—everybody satisfied—and you must needs go and upset it all.'

There was something so grotesquely peevish in Humphrey's indignation, that Letitia began to feel a sort of contemptuous pity for him. It was impossible to carry on any tragical pleading with a man like this.

'There's nothing in any of those reasons,' she said, 'to compare with a life of misery.'

'But it will not be that. As soon as you get used to it, you will be happy and thankful,' Humphrey persisted.

Letitia shook her head.

'It is no use arguing the matter,' she said. 'I hear papa coming. Once for all, will you release me or not?'

'No, that I won't,' answered Humphrey decidedly.

Letitia left the room instantly, gliding past Sir George in the passage, and springing up-stairs so quickly that he had not time to speak to her. Mrs. Bushe, going down presently, found that she was fled; and was not much surprised that she did not appear again that night. Humphrey went away soon after, without mentioning the trying scene he had gone through.

When Mrs. Bushe went up-stairs to bed, she ventured to look

into Letitia's room. The girl was sitting in her dressing-gown by the fire.

'Come in and say good-night,' she said, in a voice that went to her cousin's heart; it was the old Letitia come back again, only with a new tenderness of manner. 'I love you, because you are the only one of them all that loves me. Don't break your heart about me, dear Florinda.'

She held out her arms. Mrs. Bushe laid her head on her shoulder and cried, while Letitia kissed and soothed her gently; there were no tears in her eyes.

'There, don't be unhappy,' said Letitia. 'It will all be right in the end. It is no use fighting against Fate you know. Good-night. Go to bed now, and don't think about me any more.'

Mrs. Bushe, however, lay awake all that night. Once she felt obliged to go and see what Letitia was doing, whether she was able to forget her trouble in sleep. But the door between the rooms was locked; and to her cousin's tender inquiries in the morning Letitia would only answer, 'Why shouldn't I sleep?'

CHAPTER X.

JACK'S CROFT.

THE kitchen at Jack's Croft was a great picturesque room, with an enormous fireplace and seats in the chimney-corner. A broad staircase went up on one side. The furniture was heavy and old, all in the dark oak, worn by constant use and polishing, which one finds still in some out-of-the-way farmhouses. There was handsome old blue china on the dresser, and the rough beams of the ceiling were a hanging forest of bacon and dried herbs. Before

the fire, which had a blazing log on it, stood Mrs. Pratt, bright and picturesque as her house, tall and sturdily built, with dark eyes and rosy cheeks, like her daughter Kitty's. Kitty, the only child and heiress of Jack's Croft, stood leaning against the table, with a basket in her hand and a shawl thrown over her arm.

'Mercy on us!' said Mrs. Pratt. 'And where is she now?'

'I left her in the garden with him,' answered Kitty, smiling. 'He was looking out for me, you see, and he met us at the gate. I never saw such a look on a man's face, mother. How he does worship her, to be sure!'

'Well, Kitty, it's the queerest affair altogether as ever I heard tell of. She can't stay here, you know. You'll have to take her back, or perhaps father'll drive her in the gig. It's a long way for a girl that isn't used to trudging, like you are. She had no business to have come at all, and that's the long and short of it. You oughtn't to have brought her.'

'You'd have done the same, mother, if she'd looked up in your face and said, "My whole happiness depends on seeing that gentleman at once. Let me go home with you." You couldn't have set yourself against her, sweet pretty creature.'

As Kitty spoke Crosby and Letitia came in together. Mrs. Pratt curtsied, and hastened to set a chair for the young lady. However shocked the good woman might be, she could not forget her manners.

'No, thank you. I cannot sit down,' said Letitia quickly. 'O Mrs. Pratt, I hear you are very kind-hearted. I have so much to ask you.'

'Mrs. Pratt is the very best woman in the world,' said Crosby.

'The most generous and the noblest. That is lucky for us, as our whole future depends upon her.'

'Law, sir, I don't understand you,' said Mrs. Pratt.

'My dear friend,' said Crosby, with the greatest earnestness, 'let me explain to you. When I accepted your hospitality, and that of your good husband, I told you that private affairs of my own, about which I was very anxious, might keep me for a few days in this neighbourhood. Now you see the explanation. I need not say any more, need I?'

Mrs. Pratt looked from one charming young face to the other. She could not help smiling; but she bit her lips and shook her head.

'Why, sir, I don't clearly see what you are driving at,' she said. 'And if you want my opinion, it is that this lady had better go quietly home again.'

'Don't be so cruel and severe, Mrs. Pratt. You are giving her quite a false idea of you,' said Crosby.

'Well, sir,' said Mrs. Pratt, with firmness, 'if our Kitty was to run off to somebody else's house to meet a young man without our approval, I know very well what her father and me would say to her.'

'But Kitty would never be so cruelly treated as I have been, so driven to extremity,' said Letitia. 'For no reason my father turned him out of the house, and means to force me to marry another man. All depends on my escaping. I must escape. Mrs. Pratt, you will help us?'

Letitia came forward and took one of the good woman's strong brown hands, holding it tight between her own, and looking up with eyes that might have softened a millstone.

'My dear,' said the farmer's wife tenderly, 'do just consider what a foolish thing you are doing. Leaving your home and everything just because a handsome young gentleman asks you. There ain't one among them, my dear, that's worth it. If I was to do my duty I should just have the horse put in, and get the master to drive you back home this minute. I never heard such madness in my life. As for you, sir, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Pray how do you expect me to help you?'

'Perhaps your friendliness made me expect too much,' said Crosby. 'But since I received this lady just now at the garden-gate, I have thought that you would persuade your husband to lend me his gig and that strong horse I admire so highly. Then I should drive to London, where discovery is almost impossible. It also seemed to me likely that you might allow your daughter to accompany us. I would see to her safe return.'

At these demands Mrs. Pratt lost patience, and observed very sharply that gentlefolks thought the world was made for them. She begged the Captain to give her no more of his nonsense. She would not listen to another word. Kitty go with them, indeed! Kitty was a respectable young woman, who had never been in London in her life, and never should go to such a wicked place with her mother's good will.

At the end of all this, which sounded rather hopeless, Letitia sank into a chair and hid her face in her hands. Captain Crosby frowned as he stood beside her.

'Are you ill, dear madam?' said Kitty, going up to Letitia.

'Yes. I am very tired and miserable,' sighed Letitia.

'Bless her dear heart, I daresay

she is,' said Mrs. Pratt, all her natural kindness returning. 'Come, then, my pretty one, go up-stairs and rest in Kitty's room for a while. Then you shall go quietly home. They're all wild after you already.'

'I shall never go home,' said Letitia.

'Well, anyhow, go and rest yourself a bit. You're that excited, you don't know what you're saying. That's right; lean on Kitty, my dear.'

Crosby stood and saw his lady-love conveyed away up the dark old staircase. It was true that the painful excitement she had gone through lately, added to the fatigue of that morning's walk, had been almost too much for Letitia. He was almost wild, between anxiety for her, and the difficulty of getting out of this new scrape with success and honour.

'You will do a very cruel and very foolish thing, Mrs. Pratt,' he said, 'if you refuse to help us in such an emergency as this.'

'Sir,' said Mrs. Pratt, 'I'm sorry to disagree with a gentleman like you. But your own conscience tells you that it's a cruel and a foolish thing *you're* wanting to do. No good ever came of a young lady's going against the will of her family.'

'Confound her family!'

'I won't be sworn at in my own kitchen, sir, if you please,' said Mrs. Pratt.

'I beg your pardon,' said Crosby, bowing. 'I am a good deal irritated just now, and with reason.'

He walked out through a door that led into the garden. Mrs. Pratt looked after him.

'I never did see a pleasanter young man, nor a handsomer,' she soliloquised. 'But the impudence of these here officers! Our best horse, and Kitty into the

bargain! What'll he want next, I wonder? That young lady goes back to Sir George's this very day, as soon as Pratt comes in, or I'm not mistress in my own house. I'll have no such doings here.'

Crosby was mooning about up and down the tidy garden-walks, almost at his wits' end what to do with his treasure, now that he had it, when Kitty Pratt came carefully creeping down in the shadow of a hedge, beckoning to him. He joined her, and they had a long confidential talk in an arbour, where her father smoked his pipe on summer evenings. Then Kitty went back in the same cautious manner to the house again.

That was a strange day at the farm—it was very still, the sun was shining, and the hours crawled on slowly—to Mrs. Pratt, vexed and anxious, as she waited for her husband to come in; to Letitia, following Kitty's advice by staying in her room; to Kitty herself, with all her resolution and cleverness; to Crosby, as he wandered about outside, uneasy, in spite of his faith in Kitty, and not caring to go in and encounter her mother.

Towards one o'clock a message came in from the farmer, saying that there was no need to wait dinner for him. A friend of his, ten miles off, had sent to say that some of his most valuable cows were ill, and he should be glad to see him and hear his opinion of them. So he had ridden off at once from the field, and very likely would not be back till late at night.

Mrs. Pratt and Kitty and Crosby dined together rather silently at the great kitchen-table, the servants dining in the back kitchen beyond. Letitia did not come down. After dinner Mrs. Pratt retired into the parlour, and seated herself in her own large armchair,

quite determined, with such dangerous people in the house, not to go to sleep as usual. But nature and habit were too much for her, and perhaps she slept with unusual soundness, after her agitation in the morning.

Crosby went out into the garden, and Kitty into the yard, where everything was very quiet. There was always a lull in the farm-work in the middle of the day, and just now not a man was to be seen about the premises; possibly one or two were resting themselves in a warm corner of the barn. Kitty went to the yard-gate, and looked up and down the road; not a creature to be seen. Yes! there was a horse trotting up the lane. In another minute he had stopped at the gate.

'Good-day,' said Kitty, perceiving at once that the rider was one of Sir George's men.

'Good-day, missus. We are in sad trouble down at Sir George Monkton's. Our young lady's gone, and we are searching for her all over the country. You haven't seen nothing of her?'

'If I had,' said Kitty, 'don't you think I'd have brought her back by now? She's not a young lady to be wandering about by herself.'

'That she ain't. Well, I wonder where she can be gone. There was that Irish gentleman, Captain Crosby, as they say is a tailor's son. Sir George thinks she's run off with him, perhaps to London.'

'Mark my words,' said Kitty; 'if she's gone with him, they'd never do such a blundering thing as go to London. Why, it's full of Sir George's friends, surely. They'd find them in a minute. No, they'd have gone straight off to Ireland. No doubt about it. That's the road you ought to take, young man, if you want to catch them.'

'Ireland! Well, and I shouldn't wonder if you was right, missus,' said the man; and he touched his hat and rode off.

'Crosby—a tailor's son?' repeated Kitty to herself as she turned from the gate. 'Anyhow I must help them. I wonder if she knows it, though, throwing of herself away like that. Well, it's time for me to harness Boney.'

Fortunately for Kitty's designs the stable where her father's best horses lived, and the place where the gig was kept, were in a quiet corner of the premises, with their backs turned to the large yard, and opening on a little grass yard of their own, only commanded from the house by Kitty's own window. From this small court there were two gates, one into the large yard, the other into a large field with a grass road across it, so that a carriage could drive away from Jack's Croft quite silently.

Just as Kitty was buckling her last strap, Captain Crosby appeared at the stable-door.

'Doing it yourself?' he said.

'The fewer we trust, the safer we are, sir,' replied Kitty.

'It is early for you to have come to that conclusion,' said Crosby, hardly noticing the coolness of Kitty's manner towards himself.

'Well, sir, if you'll put him into the gig,' said Kitty, 'I'll fetch the young lady.'

'Kitty, one moment; are you repenting of your goodness to us?'

'Repent!' said Kitty scornfully. She hesitated a moment, and then went on, speaking very quickly: 'There was one of Sir George's men at the gate just now, asking for her. I sent him off pretty quick. But he told me something about you.'

'What was it, now? That my father was a tailor?'

His laughing eyes were almost too much for Kitty; she turned away from them.

'Well, if he was, you're not good enough for Miss Monkton; you know you're not. And I suppose she knows nothing about it?'

'Ask her. Say anything you like to her. I give you free permission,' said Crosby.

'I might do it without that,' muttered Kitty, as she walked away.

She found Letitia in a state of feverish impatience waiting for her. She had been looking out of the window into the little yard, had seen Crosby standing at the stable-door laughing, and wondered why in the world he was wasting time so. Kitty looked rather grave as she came into the room.

'Before we go down, ma'am, may I say a word to you?' she said.

'O yes; to tell me to walk softly. Of course I will,' said Letitia.

'Yes; but there's something else. I've promised to serve you, and I mean to keep my word; but I've heard just now something about the Captain, from one who came asking after you. They say he's a tailor's son, and I thought you ought to know it.'

'Why, Kitty,' exclaimed Letitia, turning round in a sudden fire of indignation, 'am I to be tormented with this by you, too? I neither know nor care whose son he is. If he was your lover, would you care whether his father was a king, or a tailor, or something much lower still—a beggar in the streets, if you like? Wouldn't you trust him?'

'I don't know about that, ma'am,' said Kitty. 'And I shouldn't like either a king or beggar; one's own station is best.'

'O, plague on all your prudence and wisdom!' cried Letitia. 'There, he has got the horse in. Lead the way now. I'll follow you like a mouse.'

Three minutes later, Captain Crosby, Miss Monkton, and the generous but undutiful Kitty were seated in Farmer Pratt's gig, and his good horse Boney was trotting swiftly and silently across the grass-road towards the labyrinth of cross-country lanes, through which, under Kitty's guidance, they meant to make a bold dash for London.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LONDON CHURCH.

If Letitia had once called her country home a living sepulchre, the London house in which she now found herself deserved that title much more. It was in a narrow street of tall dark old houses like itself, with no thoroughfare, so that nobody ever came down it who had not some business at the houses themselves. Even then these houses, though they were close to a busy part of the City, were deserted by the people for whom their fine broad staircases had been built, their large rooms floored with oak, their panellings and balusters carved handsomely. But no wonder, for they were terribly dark and dismal. Letitia could not help feeling this, though the woman to whom the house seemed to belong—a wild, untidy, warm-hearted Mrs. O'Brien—had received the runaways as if they were a prince and princess, had almost gone down on her knees to adore Letitia, and had raved about her beauty till Letitia was obliged to beg her to stop. At last leaving Mrs. O'Brien to Kitty, she found herself standing with

Crosby in one of the windows of the drawing-room, which smelt rather musty in spite of its large fire, and the magnificence of all its yellow brocade and carving and mirrors.

'O Gerald, what a strange house!' said Letitia; 'and who is that funny woman?'

'She is a countrywoman of mine, the best and faithfulest creature,' said Crosby. 'She was in our service, and then married Lord Killarney's butler; and they took this house with all its old furniture, as you see, and let lodgings. I trust you won't dislike her?'

'O no, not if she is a friend of yours,' said Letitia.

It struck her directly that by a question to Mrs. O'Brien she could probably hear the whole truth as to Crosby's parentage; but this was a temptation easily conquered.

'I shall not ask her who you are,' she said, smiling at him.

'As to that, my darling, please yourself,' answered Crosby.

Letitia shook her head, and the subject was not again alluded to between them.

Kitty was not so delicate-minded. She asked Mrs. O'Brien a whole string of questions, and apparently had satisfactory answers, for her spirits rose, while those of Letitia flagged a little. They remained quietly in the lodging for a week or more. Crosby, who was staying somewhere else, came to see them every day, and often had to spend most of his time in consoling Letitia, who was seized with fits of home-sickness and self-reproach.

'At any rate, my dearest angel,' Crosby remonstrated, 'your father brought it all on himself. If he had not treated you with such tyranny, you would have been at home at this moment, and we

should have waited patiently for better times. But we had no alternative.'

'Ah, yes, I know. But I am so sorry about Florinda. She is such a dear creature, and loves me so sincerely. My happiness was everything to her, and papa made her completely miserable. What must she be feeling now?'

'We will make it all up to her, one of these days,' said Crosby. 'Her home shall be with us; will that please you, my Letitia?'

'Yes, indeed; you are very good.'

Somehow the clouds soon passed away, and the future shone out very brightly again. The mystery of it was only like a soft golden haze, which made it more attractive and delightful. No matter whose son Crosby might turn out to be, he must always be himself, and he was perfection. At last came a morning, when through a thick yellow fog, lighted by link-boys along the streets, a small party of people went from Mrs. O'Brien's house to the very dimmallest of City churches, with pews and galleries, stuffy moth-eaten curtains and hangings, a few dim candles lighted about the east end, a fat old clerk with spectacles and a bad cough, a vague dreamy clergyman with a pale face and a mass of gray hair. What a strange wedding for the heiress of Sir George Monkton! Perhaps such things had often happened in that church before, for both parson and clerk seemed to take it as a matter of course; and there was no awaking of interest or curiosity in either pair of eyes, at the sight of this elegant young gentleman and lady in travelling dress, with their two incongruous witnesses, Kitty Pratt and Mrs. O'Brien. The clerk gave away the bride as if it was part of his day's work, and he had

given away hundreds before. The solemn words of the service, gabbled as they were, had a great effect on Letitia; when it was over, she was crying so much that she could hardly see to write her name in the register, and neither saw nor thought of the name that was written above. Kitty did, however, and smiled as she scratched her own.

Gerald Crosby led his wife down the damp old passage between the pews, and out at the side-door of the church into a street where a post-chaise was waiting. He and Letitia were inside it, and the horses were moving, before she realised what had happened.

'O, good-bye—good-bye, Kitty!' she cried, starting forward.

Kitty curtsied, and waved her hand.

'God bless and prosper ye, my—' screamed Mrs. O'Brien; the end of her sentence was lost in the rattle of the wheels.

Two days later, Kitty returned to Jack's Croft in her father's gig, drawn by Boney, and driven by Mrs. O'Brien's respectable husband. She brought back with her two or three fashionable gowns and bonnets, a shawl for her mother, a silver-mounted hunting-whip for her father, and a hundred-pound note, which Captain Crosby had left in her hand with a very hearty squeeze, just before he got into the carriage.

After being well scolded and forgiven, Kitty set off to relieve the minds of Letitia's relations. Fortunately, perhaps, for her, Sir George was in London, searching for the runaways.

Mrs. Bushe never dreamed of reproaching Kitty for her part in the matter. It was too delightful to have her mind so entirely set at rest. She cried first; but soon dried her tears, kissed and thanked

Kitty, and rejoiced with all her heart.

CHAPTER XII.

LADY FITZPATRICK.

THERE was a fashionable place in those days, not a hundred miles from London, which shall be called Gaytown-by-the-Sea. London people who had any reason for disliking Brighton, and yet liked sea air combined with dancing and card-playing, went there a good deal. There were Assembly Rooms, a high promenade overlooking the sea, a few good shops, and a comfortable hotel. The climate was supposed to be very mild, and so it was in the first fortnight of Letitia's married life, which she spent there. She and her husband, however, did not take much part in the gaieties of the place, neither did they walk up and down the promenade. They spent most of their days away on the shore, enjoying the green tumbling sea and the fantastic forms of the yellow cliffs, picking up shells and seaweed like two happy children. Crosby sketched, and Letitia suggested and admired. People at Gaytown wondered who they were and what they were doing, this young couple who somehow looked more fitted for society than for roughing it as they did, making friends with the fishermen and venturing out in boats on this winter sea with the most surprising boldness. Yet nobody who thought the thing strange knew how strange it really was, and that the young bride herself often wondered who she and her husband were. She had married him in full faith and trust. At the moment when the mystery might have been cleared up to her by a glance at the

register, her mind had been confused and her eyes blinded by tears. Since then Crosby had told her nothing, and she had not chosen to ask him; yet at times, now that the first excitement was over, she felt quite wild with curiosity. Nobody knew where they were, for Crosby would not let her write. Kitty's revelations had been quite enough, he thought, to set Sir George's and everybody's mind at rest. He told Letitia that they knew everything, and were quite happy about her. Letitia smiled as she thought, 'Then you can't be a tailor's son;' but she asked no questions, though she wondered how they knew. Crosby saw the wonder in her eyes, and answered it:

'Molly O'Brien was a traitor, and told Kitty all sorts of things.'

'If they all know, why shouldn't I?' thought Letitia, but she did not say it.

One evening, as they walked back along the sands, Crosby said to her,

'This is rather an important day to me, and it is our last but one at Gaytown, unless you wish to stay longer. But you shall decide that to-morrow before I order the horses.'

'As you please,' said Letitia. 'I like the place amazingly. Perhaps we may be here again some day.'

'Yes; for certainly no place can be associated with more charming recollections.'

'No, indeed. But what is it that makes this an important day to you?'

'It is three years to-night since I laid a wager, which I have won. And after all it was not such a foolish one,' said Crosby.

The morning of that next day broke with furious showers of hail, and Letitia, who had been looking

forward to a last walk, stood at the window rather disappointed. Her husband, however, was in the highest spirits. He had not told her anything yet, and, now that the suspense was just over, it is sad to have to say that Letitia's happy faith began to flag a little. She was tired, perhaps; at any rate, she thought that secrets and wagers and all such things were tiresome and ridiculous, and that it did not much signify after all whether her father-in-law—he was dead, too—had been an Irish tailor or an Irish squire. But she was ashamed of her ill-temper all the time, and looked up smiling when her husband pointed out a ray of sunshine shooting from under a flying cloud, and said that the weather was clearing off, and they might as well take a turn on the promenade.

'To tell you the truth, my dear Letty,' he said, 'I promised to meet a friend there. So pray put your bonnet on, and let us go at once.'

'O yes! What friend is it?' asked Letitia. 'I had no notion that you knew any one here.'

'He arrived from town last night,' said Crosby; and with this Letitia had to be satisfied.

By the time they reached the promenade the sun had fairly chased the clouds away, and was shining out quite warmly and pleasantly. The sea was covered with white horses frisking, and made a great noise as it came thundering on the rocks down below. There was a fresh wind still blowing, and people who ventured on the promenade could hardly keep their feet at first. In consequence of this it was almost deserted. But at the further end of it there was a quiet place sheltered by a wall of cliff; and here, long before they reached it, Letitia saw a lady and gentleman standing.

'Are those your friends, Gerald?' she said.

'Yes, dearest,' he answered, pressing her arm, and looking down with a bright triumphant smile.

The rude wind had disarranged his wife's bonnet a little, and had blown some curls over her face. But he thought she had never looked more lovely than she did that morning by the sea, as he led her on to meet those two who were waiting for them in the shadow of the rock.

As for those two, the lady was middle-aged and the gentleman young. As Letitia came nearer to him, she saw in their smiling dark eyes, their graceful figures, their whole air and appearance, such a wonderful likeness to Crosby, that she half stopped and clung to him.

'O Gerald, who are they?'

He did not answer; for, seeing her movement, the lady came quickly forward.

'Mother, this is my wife,' said Gerald gently.

'My sweet girl!' said the lady, embracing Letitia, who felt as if she was in a dream.

'Will Lady Fitzpatrick spare a word to her brother Denis?' said the young man after a moment; and Letitia turned round to shake hands with the strongest possible likeness of her husband. Only Denis was rather shorter, and not quite so ornamental.

'Ah, now tell me who he is!' said Letitia, looking up at Gerald's mother with all the earnestness of an Irish girl.

'Do you mean to say he has not told you? You poor dear heroic creature!'

'Why, my lady, of course he has not told her!' exclaimed Denis, laughing. 'He would have lost that wager of ours, which I have regretted so bitterly ever

since. However, my five thousand pounds won't go out of the family, that is some comfort. Now, Fitzpatrick, I hope you mean to pay your debts. By the bye, all is smooth for you with Sir George Monkton. We met him in town the day before yesterday. He attacked me like a raging lion, actually mistaking me for you—that's a compliment for you. I could not have pacified him, but her ladyship took him in hand and brought him to reason.'

'Hush, Denis; remember who you are talking of,' said his mother. 'Come, dear Letitia, I'll walk with you to your lodging, and we will leave these two rattlepates to settle their own affairs. I am afraid this distracted wager of theirs has cost you a good deal of suffering.'

'O no,' said Letitia, as the lady took her arm, and walked with her towards the town. 'I could not have been happier. But pray tell me who he is, and all about it.'

'My dear, I can't understand your not knowing. He is Lord Fitzpatrick, of course. Only an Irish peerage, people will tell you; but for my part I think we are as good as the English. As to this wager, he began by spending great sums on building and improving, and a great deal of nonsense. He went beyond his income and got into difficulties. Then he resolved to volunteer into the army. His brother said to him very naturally, that no doubt his name would get him a commission at once. This hurt Fitzpatrick's foolish pride. He told Denis he would lay him a wager of five thousand pounds that he would keep his name and birth a profound secret for three years, be known as nothing but an adventurer, and yet get on in the army as well as any other man. He

even said that if any stories were invented as to his birth, he would not contradict them. We never thought such a mad idea could be carried out for three years. He has done it, however, and has contrived to win you too, by far the gayest feather in his cap. I am obliged to respect him now.'

Lady Fitzpatrick talked a good deal more about her sons and their wagers; but this was all that Letitia cared much to hear. Except that she was glad to find the dear name Crosby not quite an imagination; it was his mother's name. And Gerald was really his own.

The story of Miss Monkton's marriage may as well end here. One has the satisfaction of knowing that Letitia never regretted her trust in the Irish adventurer.

Sir George was angry for some time, and did not finally forgive

them till Humphrey Barrett, having married a rich brewer's daughter, deserted his political colours, and came in for the county on the wrong side, which was his father-in-law's. After this Sir George repented, and was very civil to Lord Fitzpatrick.

Mrs. Bushe took up her abode with Letitia, and lived on the most affectionate terms with her and her husband. Letitia's children grew up to love her and tyrannise over her, as their mother had done before them.

But I will not say anything about Letitia's children, charmingly agreeable people as they are. I can only think of their mother as almost a child herself, dancing round the room in a white frock, all her curls shaking, or trotting smilingly along the snowy shrubbery, wrapped in scarlet, to her first meeting with the hero of her dreams.

THE BELLES OF THE PAST AND THE PRESENT.

CAN Beauty ever grow less rare
In truth or dream ?
Though through long years it has been fair,
Or so men deem.

We still repeat, in strains more new,
The old, old theme ;
And praise rings on in flatt'ry true,
As praise may seem.

Words written in long days gone by—
Sweet days, I ween—
But tell us how all fair things fly—
What is, has been.

Before my eyes strange visions rise—
Perhaps I dream—
I see the smile of azure eyes,
The golden stream

Of bright loose hair in lustrous glow,
The silken sheen
Of radiant hues where bright robes flow
Round Beauty's Queen ;

And red lips curve in tender smile,
And bright eyes gleam
From where the curtained lids beguile—
Some tender dream.

A stately moving crowd pass by,
Less gay, I ween,
Than that which in these days is nigh
To Fashion's Queen.

Yet in past times when Beauty's power
Was thrall unseen,
Yet surely felt in hall and bower,
In glen and green,

What spell or magic could it hold,
What guerdon glean,
That now our languid hours unfold
In stranger mien ?

Are women fair as when God gave
His curse to sin,
Ere sorrow's shadows dug the grave
That all must win ?

No need to look on pictured forms ;
The years between
Their lives and ours have passed like storms,
Unfelt, unseen.

But all the years that still may be,
Or once have been—
Each set with stores, so swift to flee,
So sweet to glean—

What saw they that these new strange days
Have left unseen,
When Beauty claims its meed of praise
For Fashion's Queen ?

Though from the fairest garden flower—
Pure, pale, serene—
Our season's belle her sweetest dower
Has gained, I ween !

Back from the past my fancy glides
Down Mem'ry's stream ;
While present loveliness abides,
More fair 'twill seem.

Through all the season's golden weeks
No sweeter theme
The tongue or pen of poet seeks
Than such a dream

As links the present to the past
In changeful scene ;
For Beauty shall all change outlast
That once has been.

Before my gaze are lovelier eyes
And sweeter mien ;
Who's fair to-day, past fame defies,
As—Fashion's Queen ?

RITA.

THE RESTORER OF ST. MARY'S.

A Warwickshire Story.

OFFA, King of Mercia, must have kept a merry court as well as a splendid one in the days of his imperious rule. Without any sea-coast his realm was comparatively free from fear of the invasions of the sea-kings, and from the richness of the lands, the splendid size and quality of the timber, and the covert afforded by the good greenwood to wild boar and deer, and all sorts of smaller game, Offchurch must have been a centre of prosperity as well as sport. What British Nimrod even now can wish for better winter quarters than are to be found in the midst of that smiling country? What lover of Nature can hope to see more splendid monarchs of the forest than those which rise and shadow with their mighty limbs the park-like fields and glades of Warwickshire? and where can the ear, wearied with the twang of cockney speech, revel in such wells of English undefiled as issue from the lips of the natives of this superlatively midland county? Nor are these its only attractions; for there is a spot in this favoured region where no fewer than twelve springs of different mineral waters percolate through the sandy soil, and draw around them thousands of people whose constitutions have been ruined by the effects of disease or folly, and who find in quaffing the saline or sulphureous contents of the steaming goblets handed them by smiling nymphs, an amusement and distraction, and occasionally a cure.

Waterton has indeed been a

place of rapid growth : half a century ago it numbered only three-score dwellings, one church, no public buildings, and fewer than a thousand inhabitants ; and to-day it has its pump-rooms, baths, and libraries, its giant hotels, huge stables, and smart villas, its high school, and public gardens. Its churches are numerous, and suited to every shade of opinion. All, however, fade into insignificance, and are not to be named in the same day as St. Mary's, the oldest of them all, which rises with its hoary tower upon the river bank, and flings the melodies of its eight bells far and wide over the homes of the living and the dead, and audible at incredible distances through the rural reaches of the level land. The architecture within is loveliest Gothic ; the stained windows can only be compared in richness of hue to those which adorn St. Gudule in Brussels, or those of the Parisian church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, to the interior of which it bears a certain resemblance. The pulpit, reading-desk, and stalls are specimens of the most exquisite carving, and the spirit at whose behest all these beauties have been brought together is, or rather was, that of the vicar, whose tall form, bowed head, and woe-begone visage might until recently have been seen wandering about in the churchyard with an absent sort of air that invited criticism and distanced confidence. No one could look at the Rev. Philip Curry without seeing that he had

suffered. For forty years among a fluctuating population that came and went like the restless waves upon the shore, there were but few who knew his story, understood his aims, or cared what paths of grief his wandering feet had trod. There was indeed a woman, who haunted a humble grave hard by the western door, who always had a good word for him, but she was only a poor dazed creature, who, though often inquired of by visitors, gave only one reply, and was charitably supposed to know no better. Those who were familiar with the old churchyard in times gone by can hardly fail to remember her—Mary Trustlove was her name, and, by a curious coincidence not always to be met with, her nature too. The grass-grown mound on which she daily sat and crooned to herself as the swift needle passed through her fingers was her lover's grave, for though her flaxen hair was getting gray, and her lustreless eyes were dim and bleared with weeping, she had once been youthful and beloved, or at all events she thought so. She must always have been weak-minded, and her loss had all but overthrown her reason, though she had sense enough to supplement a little annuity by doing plain needle-work, to provide herself always with a pale-blue print gown, and to bend her steps daily to the haven where her heart was. If people spoke to her sharply or jeered her she called them bad, but if they addressed her gently, or did her any little service, they ranked as good in her category, and hence her invariable words about the vicar were, 'He is a good man; a good man he is.' That Mr. Curry was a native of Erin was evident from his voice and appearance, and he frequently told his friends and acquaintances that as a child he was brought

up in the Roman Catholic faith, but abjured it in early manhood, prepared himself to take Holy Orders, and became curate of a parish near Dublin. He was but poor, having only an income of 100*l.* a year besides his curacy; but being foolish enough to dream of the practicability of love in a cottage, married a young lady whose only fortune was her pretty face and sweet disposition, and by way of honeymoon took her to the village near Bantry Bay, where his own youth had been spent. There are few pilgrimages in life more delightful than those made by husband and wife to the early haunts of either; each longs to show the other the nook where he or she was wont to sit and dream of what the coming years might bring, to saunter together beside the shady bank where the first violets bloom, to watch the sunset glow and fade over the purple hills, and to gather every crumb of information that helps in understanding the past of the beloved. Philip and his bride were tasting these joys, and walking arm-in-arm by moonlight down a lane with steep high banks on either side, as they babbled the happy nothings that rise to the lips of the newly-married, when there came a flash, and the young wife, pierced through the very heart, fell lifeless at her husband's side. The shot was meant for him, and not for her; but the bigot-assassin, thinking the deed was done as he intended, made the best of his way off, and though much alarm was felt by the friends of the Currys at their non-appearance, the truth was not suspected, and a labourer going through the lane the next morning came upon Philip sitting on the ground with a scared face, holding his dead wife tenderly in his arms, and saying, 'Hush, she is asleep; don't wake her.'

Help was soon forthcoming, and when the body was lifted from the stiff embrace in which it had lain that night for the last time, poor Philip began to shriek and sob so wildly, and struggle so violently against being led away, that he was taken by force to the house of a kindly farmer who had known him as a boy, and put to bed, where he lay delirious with brain fever for many weeks, but struggled through it at last, as young creatures with sound constitutions usually do, and wake up to face their misery afresh. When health and strength returned he bade farewell not only to his friends, but to old Ireland for ever, and went to London, where he became a curate in a West-end church. Most of his compatriots have a ready flow of words and wit, and he was remarkable for this gift even among his own people; but the graceful play of mirth and humour which sits so well on a Hibernian was burned out of him for ever in the fire of sorrow through which he had unfortunately to pass. His eloquence remained, and had gained a power and pathos which drew crowded congregations to hear him preach, and procured for him more attentions and invitations than he would have cared to accept, had not a kind physician who knew his case urged him to go into society and throw off his grief as much as might be. He was not the sort of man to have recourse to hard work to drown his sorrow; he had no taste for visiting among the poor, and to the end of his days was anything but a model parish priest, though he was kindness itself to all who asked his sympathy or such aid as he could give.

It was not very long before a well-to-do widow, a year or two

older than himself, contrived to show very plainly how much she wished to take charge of him and his comforts, and to provide her little son with a stepfather who would treat him as his own, which she was sure Philip, who was fond of children, would do. The young clergyman had no liking for a lonely life, and offered her a very sincere affection, though he did not pretend that it was even a shadow of his early love.

Being thus provided with a wife and child, that wife lost no time in endeavouring to provide her husband with a living, by coaxing an old uncle with whom she was a great favourite to offer him St. Mary's, Waterton, which was likely to fall vacant before many months were gone, as the then incumbent had had his third stroke of paralysis, and lay hovering between life and death in the pleasant vicarage looking on the river. Never was man more loth to quit a peaceful home; but the last enemy claimed him, and his place was ready for another to fill. The second Mrs. Curry was a good churchwoman as well as a good wife, an ardent admirer of the *Christian Year*, and one who loved to have an object to pursue. St. Mary's, when Philip first preached there, was a dull heavy-looking edifice, not without its good points, as for instance the Gothic arches and general plan of the building, but disfigured with painted wooden galleries of immense depth all the way round, in one of which a bevy of men with stringed instruments reigned supreme. No one who heard it will ever forget their anthem on that first Sunday. The bass-viol groaned, the violins screeched, and the voices trolled out with the utmost animation the benisons of the Psalmist on the man whose olive branches were

'round about, and round about his table.' These allusions, however, fell very flat indeed, for Philip never had a child bound to him by any nearer ties than those of his stepson, George Lovel. The living of St. Mary's was worth 400*l.* a year; Mrs. Curry enjoyed a life income of the same amount under her first husband's will; her present spouse possessed his single hundred; and her boy, if he lived to be one-and-twenty, would be very rich indeed, though if he died before attaining his majority his property would all go to a third cousin on his father's side, who, having a large and hungry family, would very much appreciate any favours that Providence might throw in his way.

The Vicarage was not an expensive house to keep up; it was all on one story, and did not require many servants; the garden contained a few borders of old-fashioned standard flowers, roses, carnations, scabious, and lavender, but for the most part consisted of lawns sloping to the water, so that no regular gardener was wanted; and all things considered the small family kept well within their income and had something to spare, for as there was scarcely any poverty in Waterton, there were but few demands upon them. Every year that Mrs. Curry lived, the more she wished to see the body of the church denuded of its galleries, and at last she prevailed upon her husband to propound his views of what the edifice might be, and to set on foot its restoration. She was sure that from their own resources they could spare at least 200*l.* a year, and then there would be contributions from visitors during both seasons, the sanitary and the hunting one, and perhaps some of the magnates of the neighbourhood might give their names and

their guineas to the good work. Philip, who, partly from early associations and partly from the nature of his own intellect, loved all kinds of beauty, music, bright colours, and fair forms, fell into her ideas, and presented them with all the force of conviction and all the adornments of his eloquence on Easter Sunday to his crowded congregation. 'If,' said he, 'our Father in Heaven has ever told His children in what manner, with what pomp, and what adjuncts He would be worshipped, it was when He gave directions for the fashioning of the tabernacle in the wilderness, for the hangings of blue and purple and scarlet that were to close in the place of His sanctuary, the gold and gems to decorate the breastplate of His priest, and the carved and wreathen work for the vessels of His service.' Very liberally they responded to his appeal and coincided in his plans, and in the course of a few weeks he had money enough in hand to justify him in engaging the services of one of the best architects of the day, who pointed out with enthusiasm the improvements that were needed, and seemed to place himself *en rapport* with the spirits of those who in the elder days of art had conceived the design of St. Mary's, so exquisitely did he propose to carry out every detail that the original lines of the building would allow to be added to or embellished. On two points the vicar was resolute: he had a horror of debt, would only have a small portion done at a time, and would have that finished as far as possible before another bit was touched; and he was equally determined that the works should be carried on in such a manner that divine service should never be interrupted. He was not in the least a Ritualist or a

Tractarian, as would have been said at that time, and had no idea of early celebrations, daily services, and so forth ; while as to the doctrines of Baptismal Regeneration and the Real Presence, he considered them too absurd to occupy the minds of sensible men for a moment. It was wonderful how much was done in a few years ; some rich and pious Americans with whom dollars were plentiful presented an organ ; stained windows were put in in memory of persons who had visited Waterton in quest of health and died there ; an oaken pulpit and reading-desk were given by a lady who had always voted the old three-decker an eyesore ; the galleries disappeared altogether ; the principal physician undertook the restoration of the baptistery, and Lord Cliffe, who was the lay rector, made himself responsible for the chancel. These were great helps, it is true, but the tower had to be under-pinned, and there was an immense amount of repair and strengthening necessary which made no show but was exceedingly costly. Mr. Curry's scruples about getting into debt had long ago been over-ridden by the persuasions of his stepson, who was now at Oxford, and even more enthusiastic about the restoration of St. Mary's than either of his parents, and who promised when he came into his fortune to make good whatever deficit there might be by that time in the funds. The first thing that awoke any ill-feeling was when the chancel was commenced, and it arose on this wise. A churchwarden who had long been in his grave had erected for himself a large and commodious pew in that part of the edifice, in days when people were not nearly so keen on the rights and wrongs of such matters as they are now, and it was occupied by his two

spinster daughters, who thought it as much their own property as their carriage or their four-post bedsteads. Mr. Curry told them it was about to be removed, and offered them seats in another part of the church ; but they scoffed at his politeness, told him they would never give up their rights, and on the Sunday after the demolition of their stronghold appeared in church with an air of calm superiority, carrying each of them a camp-stool, armed with which they marched up to the old place, planted their uncomfortable seats as nearly as possible on the precise spots they had occupied from childhood, and looked defiance at the vicar. The flag of dissension was unfurled ; the old ladies had friends who developed into partisans, and all sorts of bitterness were freely indulged in. To make things worse, a gouty old Dean, who had had more port wine and popularity than were good for him, was sojourning in Waterton for the winter, and discoursed largely to the small court that gathered round him on the signs of the times, the abomination of the Scarlet Lady, the dangerous teachings of Tract Ninety, and shook his reverend head very ominously when any one mentioned the doings at St. Mary's, accompanied by the oracular sentence, 'I fear very much the introduction of the thin end of the wedge ;' and when pressed to say more, would add, 'I hope I am wrong, but I have my doubts as to whither all this is tending.' Such words coming from such a quarter worked much mischief, and poor Mr. Curry soon began to feel that he had more enemies than friends. Week after week the spinsters mounted guard over their rights, undeterred by the chaos surrounding them, and even when the area within the com-

munion rails was extended and brought down to their very feet they did not move an inch, but planted their camp stools and entered their silent protest more firmly and vigorously than ever. Philip wrote to them, and they returned his letter; the architect called on them, and they bowed him out of the house with the loftiest civility. All other courses availing nothing, the vicar at length detailed all the circumstances in a letter to his Bishop, and received the apostolic advice, 'Leave all things till I come.'

As soon as the chancel was finished the prelate did come; and, being hospitably and delightedly entertained at the Vicarage, was eagerly questioned by his hostess as to how he intended to proceed with regard to the campstools and their occupants. Not a word, however, would he vouchsafe; and on Sunday morning when he had donned his lawn sleeves and was about to be ushered to his seat by the communion table (the days of processions as yet were not), the whole congregation saw with consternation the two gaunt gentlewomen march to their accustomed place, and assume a grimmer attitude than ever. The organist played his best voluntary, the Bishop issued from the vestry and entered the chancel, the beadle trod upon the skirt of a black silk dress as he opened the little brazen wicket that would admit his lordship to his seat; but the wise and wary dignitary stopped short, looked at the ladies, turned to the vicar, and in his sonorous voice asked the thrilling question, 'Who are these? Are they lepers that they sit without the gate?'

No more was needed; the sisters gathered their clinging draperies about them, felt in some inexpli-

cable way that they were honoured by the public notice of the Bishop, and retreated down the church to seats which were at once courteously offered them; the beadle removed their stools, and the service commenced.

It would be wearisome and useless to attempt to follow every step of Mr. Curry's career. There is no doubt that the first few years he spent at Waterton were his happiest and calmest; but they came to a sudden and lamentable close: clouds encompassed him on every side, and he would willingly have lain him down and died rather than have gone through them; but, as a French poet says too truly, 'Man is imperishable in misery.'

George Lovel was within a few weeks of his twentieth birthday, when he over-exerted himself while rowing in the 'Varsity eight' and ruptured a blood-vessel. A college friend came over by the next coach with the tidings, and the anxious mother returned with him to nurse her child. He certainly rallied for a time, and, indeed, recovered so far as to be brought home to the Vicarage, whence he used to walk feebly across to the church leaning on his stepfather's arm, and watch the progress of the works in which he had always taken so vivid an interest. He was an earnest fellow, and the influences then so powerful at Oxford had not been without their effect on him; he wished there were more Church feeling in Mr. Curry, and realised almost for the first time the difference between him and the spiritual directors to whom he had latterly been looking up, and saw that he was not one likely in any way to attach himself to either of the great parties between whom a bitter theological strife was raging, and that he would there-

fore get the worst of it from both sides.

Perhaps there was some hereditary tendency to consumption in the youth; perhaps he was one of those beloved by the gods, and therefore taken from the evil to come; at all events it soon became evident to those who watched him that his days were numbered, and before long he asked the plain question of his mother whether the doctor held out any prospect of his recovery or no.

She was obliged to tell him the truth, and after the first natural regrets at bidding farewell to the life he had found so pleasant, he endeavoured to set his house in order and take leave of earthly things. His first care was to write to the far-away cousin who would come into the property he scarcely dared hope to take possession of, and tell him the promise he had made to Mr. Curry; lay before him the fact that the few thousands required would be little more than a tenth of the whole, and urge him to devote it to the object for which he had so long intended it.

An answer came back after a few days expressing a civil hope that George might, in spite of the doctor's prognostications, live to do as he would with his own; but stating clearly that if that were not the case and the writer inherited his large fortune he should consider it his duty to bestow what he chose to spare on the Evangelical Alliance and Irish Church Missions, and that not a penny of his money would ever go towards the purchase of gewgaws utterly out of place in Protestant churches.

The poor boy was terribly disappointed and deeply distressed at the thought of the evils which he foresaw would come upon the

stepfather who had acted so good and affectionate a part by him from the beginning of the relationship between them.

'Don't fret,' said Philip; 'God will provide; contributions certainly don't come in as they did, but the payments will all be met in time.'

'If I could only live another six months,' sighed George, and checked himself immediately, and took himself to task for not being willing for all God's will towards others as well as towards his own individual self.

Fate was relentlessly cruel to our poor friend. George not only did not live to attain his majority and write the cheque which would have delivered Mr. Curry from the burden of debt, but his mother did not survive him more than a year, and Philip was once more left desolate and alone in the world. He found, too, as most of us do find by the time we reach our meridian, that the said world is utterly devoid of any organisation that might have been supposed capable of doing duty for a heart. As the honoured parent of the heir to large estates, he had enjoyed a goodly amount of consideration; as a man rejoicing in comfortable circumstances, he had had complaisant acquaintances, and even officious friends, for the simple reason that he did not need them.

Now all was changed; poverty came upon him like an armed man, debt and loneliness were his portion, and he writhed under it. Day after day he paced the churchyard path with bowed head, eyes fixed on the ground, and one arm passed behind his back clasping the other, which hung listlessly down as though he *must* take hold of something. He seldom spoke to any one, and if accosted would seem to summon his faculties from

some remote region before he could bring his intelligence to bear on the subject before him. But in all his grief and dejection he invariably gave a kindly word and melancholy smile to Mary Trustlove, as she sat sewing on her lover's grave, and would beg her to go home on wintry days out of the pitiless rain that fell unheeded on his own threadbare coat and shabby hat.

There is a wonderful amount of elasticity in human nature, and as the truth must be told it is necessary to relate that in due course of time Philip took to himself another wife, or rather she took pity on him and allowed him to become her husband. She was a good motherly woman, whose two daughters by a former marriage were happily married and could do without her; and having a modest income and no one but herself to please, she had courage to undertake the management of Waterton Vicarage and its master. Her reign there was but of short duration, for the damps arising from the river settled on a naturally delicate chest, and after brightening poor Philip's life for five or six years, and helping him annually to pay off a modicum of the debts that pressed so heavily upon him, she too departed to the better land.

Curiously enough, neither of his wives had had the power of leaving him even a life interest in any property that might have helped to smooth his path or diminish the difficulties that thickened round him in his declining years. And thus it came to pass that, all alone in a cold world, he fell into utter helplessness, and was taken to the county gaol for debt, whence he emerged at stated intervals to preach sermons that scorched the consciences of some, melted others into tears,

and left the general impression of genius gone astray.

We often say carelessly that 'it will all be one a hundred years hence,' and console ourselves in heaviness with the remembrance that

'Be the day weary or never so long,
At length it ringeth to evensong ;'

and perhaps Curry did the same. Certain it is that he one Sunday morning left his prison, and walked the three miles to his church, fainted during the prayers, was carried into the pulpit, and there spoke a few words which showed that the lamp of the spirit had well-nigh consumed the frail frame, and then some kind man took pity and drove him in a fly to the place whence he came. His soul was delivered from bondage before another Sabbath came, and the Father who knew whereof he was made, and how respectable society treats those of whom it is not worthy, put an end to his sorrows by the seal of death.

He was buried with George Lovel and his mother and the third wife, and there sleeps calm, after life's fitful fever.

Those who go into his late church wonder how it is that exquisite workmanship jostles squalid mediocrity, why the unmended roof drips and is damp-stained just above the beautiful pulpit, and why there is so much litter of rubbish round about. Perhaps it may be cleared away and the structure completed some day. Meanwhile Mary Trustlove, a gray dishevelled woman, wanders through the graveyard, wondering in her own simple way that no one greets her either in her walks or at her solitary vigil by the turfy grave; and if any one mentions the late vicar it is to tell strangers that he was a 'queer cracked man, who had three wives, and died in Swanwick gaol.'

NAVAL BRIGADES.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.



IN following the story of the war in Zululand, many of us with anxious hearts, we saw in each detail of operations reported by the correspondent some notice of the Naval Brigades serving on shore with the army; and as they have now returned to their ships, it may not be uninteresting to our readers to know how it is that our bluejackets come to serve side by side with soldiers, and what state of preparation a man-of-war is in ordinarily if called on to land her men. How is it that they, being sailors, are able at all to take their places as artillery and infantry, for not only by the correspondent's accounts have they done so, but have been noticed for their steadiness under fire, coming up to the standard of 'old soldiers'?

Although we have a large seafaring population, and many sailors in these islands, a fact which is well known to every one, yet that particular class of men who follow the sea as a calling in a man-of-war are less known to the generality of our countrymen than any other body under the crown. A bluejacket, as a man-of-war sailor is called, is rarely seen, with the exception of the few ports where there are royal dockyards or training ships. In comparison with our soldiers they are numerically few, there being only about 30,000 bluejackets, of which not more than one-fourth are in England. We are convinced that the mass of ordinary English people have no idea how those few bluejackets, on whom practically the safety of the coun-

try itself depends, are prepared to protect it. Only now and then in this maritime country of ours, odd to say, is attention turned to the Royal Navy, its officers, bluejackets, or marines; and then when anything is said about it, two things are generally apparent: one, great ignorance of the subject, which is bad for those who want information; and the other, fulsome praise of the Royal Navy and all that pertains to it, which is bad for those belonging to it.

The Royal Navy of England, from our insular position, numerous colonies, small home production, large manufactures, and consequent intercourse with all other countries of the world, has to undertake more different sorts of work than any other service under the crown; and those belonging to it must expect to have many calls made on them by her Majesty's representatives abroad. These calls may or may not be responded to; the responsibility of action rests with the naval officer, who has to decide in each case according to its circumstances.

The service of the navy in the first place is on the sea, and to all that pertains to warfare on the sea should every one belonging to it turn his attention. The sea is kept free from marauders by the navies of the world. The moment a ship is declared 'pirate,' every man-of-war may attack her irrespective of nationality, so that travellers and merchandise may proceed in safety from place to place. In maritime war, fleets must be prepared to meet fleets,

single ships engage in duels, privateers must be captured, and the enemy's commerce driven off the sea; his coast must be so guarded that nothing can be landed for use, and on any weak point parties must be landed to destroy stores likely to be useful; our island must be so protected that our merchant ships can go in and out of our ports with safety, and no descent, not even from a single ship, of the enemy be made. All this is the outline of purely maritime work. To fit the navy to undertake it, a multitude of things have to be taught and certain weapons provided, and it is from this teaching that when calls are made for bluejackets to be landed with rifles, guns, or rockets, although for a service quite distinct from that in which they have been brought up, both officers and men have been found so ready and able to undertake the work assigned to them.

A bluejacket, after being a seaman, must become a seaman-gunner, a rating of which each man-of-war has a large number. To be this he must understand how to work and fight a heavy gun, under all circumstances, of a ship at sea; for a heavy gun as much belongs to a bluejacket as a rifle to a linesman, or a horse to a trooper. The heavy gun will only serve for ship-work itself; but a part of all fighting on the sea being boat service, to enable a bluejacket to attack an enemy or defend himself in a boat, he must know how to use and fight with a boat's gun, a Gatling gun, rockets, rifle, sword-bayonet, pistol, torpedo, gun-cotton, and electrical machines.

To work a boat's gun or a Gatling, nothing new has to be taught; for rockets, pistol, torpedo, gun-cotton, and electrical machines, there must be some special training, every man-of-war having

some men who understand the use and manipulation of each. But to use the rifle and sword-bayonet, since every bluejacket may be in a boat either as one of the crew or as a specialist, he must be taught sword drill and rifle exercise, with musketry instruction. His sailor requirements have therefore taken him up to the point where he has been supplied with and taught the use of the same weapons as an artilleryman and a linesman.

As the sea is the great highway for all nations with a sea-board, so their navies are the police on it, having charge of their countrymen who reside in foreign possessions, and protecting those who travel to and fro. In this way a man-of-war takes the place of a solitary policeman on his beat, her armament and crew being looked on in the light of his truncheon; and officers and men must be prepared to do their police duty. As this consists very often in being called on to land, to attack, or guard some place, the question naturally arises, what steps are taken in our men-of-war to provide for such contingencies, and how far are they ready to act?

Every man-of-war carries a party of men, Royal Marines, few or many, according to the size of the ship, who are the only men on board trained as regular soldiers, ready and fit to land for any warlike operations; but as the number of these men is always small, and the bluejackets have the same weapon, and may be wanted on shore also, they are formed into one or more companies according to their number, and company drill takes its place in the regular teaching of a man-of-war's man. Here, then, we have each Royal ship carrying a body of highly-trained and superior soldiers, the marines, and a body of slightly trained make-shift sol-

diers, the bluejackets. Bluejackets know all about the working of guns—field gun-carriages are supplied—and a party of men are easily trained as a field-gun's crew, dragging the gun in lieu of using horses. Some ships have two field carriages, all ships one; the gun used being a nine-pounder. Then haversacks are supplied, pioneer tools find their way on board, and pioneers get organised. Then the men's belts get fitted so as to allow of a blanket containing certain necessaries in its roll being attached; and always, as there is an improvement in infantry arms, the sailors—when the improved weapon has been decided on—have been furnished with it. Muskets have been supplied to the navy from time immemorial, changed to rifles as that arm was introduced; cutlasses also; but we find that it was not until 1836 that field guns and carriages were first issued, haversacks in 1840, and pioneer tools in 1864; the belts have been altered from time to time, and we understand there is now under consideration the matter of the supply to the navy of regular landing accoutrements for bluejackets, including leggings, water-bottles, and some good way of carrying the shift of clothing that is required; but this has yet to come.

Rockets having been in use in the navy since 1833, the handling of them is well known and understood, so that if in a small war a rocket battery is wanted, bluejackets can always work it; and though happening on shore, it may be looked on as a part of their regular business. We therefore find company drill and field-gun exercise have been taught our bluejackets for years, and as they have been found to understand the simple movements easily, when ships have been gathered together

and there happened to be a naval spirit in authority with a turn for soldiering, the men have been at intervals organised with battalions and batteries, and landed for drill, until now these things have become a regular part of a blue-jacket's training; and as a source from which the required knowledge should come, the navy has two schools, one at Portsmouth and the other at Devonport, called the 'Gunnery Establishments.' Men are specially instructed there in all these points, getting extra pay according to their proficiency, and being drafted in bodies to every ship as gunnery instructors and seaman-gunners, so that for any shore operation a man-of-war contains all the elements that may be required to prepare the men: discipline, instructors, arms, most of the equipments, and stores. Having got these, and with the past history of naval service on shore as a guide, when a ship leaves England for service abroad, her officers have to begin preparations for training the men so as to be ready to meet any calls that may be made on them.

It must be understood that in the first place the ship herself is made ready by exercise for a sea fight, and then that her boats are prepared and exercised for all boat-work. After this comes the preparation for what may be called purely naval work, that which commonly happens. A tribe or barbarous nation has committed some atrocity on whites, and must be punished; the flag has been insulted, and an apology has to be made; some fighting between opposite parties is going on in some town where there are British subjects and British property which have to be protected; or some ally, whom we are bound by treaty to assist, is being threatened by an enemy. Each of these cases means

that the bluejackets and marines are almost sure to be landed under cover of the ship's guns, which guns must be kept sufficiently manned so as to be serviceable. Therefore the first company of bluejackets organised will be those men who make up the boats' crews, each man of which, with the exception of the bowmen and coxswains, is armed with a rifle and sword-bayonet. Large ironclads give two companies of about 43 men each, or one large company of 86 men, and the boat parties of marines in another company of about 36 men—a total of 122 men, exclusive of officers, who are also taken from amongst the boat officers; the guns of the ship being left capable of being worked with diminished crews, so that each gun's crew should have amongst it a certain number of boats' crews, if possible no two men in the same boat. The company or companies should be organised complete, the carpenters belonging to the boats making the pioneer party; the coxswains and bowmen, under a couple of officers, remain in charge of the boats as a beach-party; the seamen-gunners from the boats guns are the markers and supernumeraries to each company; the armourers and signalmen from the stretcher party; no spare ammunition is carried; the men have their supply with them; the boats must be kept ready for a retreat, with the guns prepared to cover it. If an expedition of this sort requires a field gun it must be specially put in the boats, the gun's crew going with it; and if the expedition is for the purpose of burning any stores or houses, an incendiary party from the ship must also be specially detailed according to the circumstances of each case.

The number of rifles supplied to ships, being in excess of what

is wanted to arm the boats' crews, are issued to other men of the crew, who are taught the use of the arm, for rifle firing takes a part in any sea-fight, and as bluejackets may be wanted for service on shore the men so armed are formed into other companies; giving two more of some 50 men each, and making up the boats' crews companies with some spare men to the same number, so that an ironclad has some 200 small-arm men, bluejackets, ready for landing, which with her marines, perhaps 80 men, is the infantry that can be supplied.

As to the marines, it may be worthy of note that no regiment of the Guards or line can boast of finer men or better soldiers. As inhabitants of an island with many dependencies, we would call them superior soldiers to any others, for two reasons, their long service and adaptability of transport. They are always ready, and their naval training teaches them to stow closer and better than any other soldier; and as in any war our soldiers must cross the sea, it is the marines who are best fitted to be sent first.

Every man-of-war being supplied with one, and sometimes two, field gun-carriages—for one, a gun is supplied, for the extra one a boat's gun is taken—so field-guns' crews are organised and taught, 19 men to each gun. To this latterly has been added the machine, or Gatling gun, which we have heard of as playing its part in Zululand by bluejackets. It has a crew of 19 men. All these guns' crews are armed with cutlass and revolver pistol. We can now see what an ironclad has ordinarily ready for service on shore if required; the men come under the term of 'landing parties,' having a special bugle call; 4 companies of bluejackets, 200 men; one of

marines, 80 men ; two field guns, and Gatling guns crew, 57 men ; 4 pioneers, 12 in the stretcher party, 17 to carry the spare ammunition, 4 for medical stores, 3 armourers, 4 signalmen, 4 buglers, and 20 officers, making a total of 405. In a corvette, which may be taken as the smallest ship with complete landing parties, there would be 2 small-arm companies of 112 men, one company of marines of 25 men, 1 field gun's crew of 19 men, 1 Gatling gun's crew of 19 men, 2 pioneers, 10 in the stretcher party, 9 to carry the spare ammunition, 3 with medical stores, 1 armourer, 2 signalmen, 3 buglers, and 10 officers, a total of 215. All other ships in the navy, with the exception of the very small ones, are ready with the same divisions and parties of men, the numbers varying between the two totals according to their size ; and we can assure our readers that in every man-of-war, all that pertains to the landing parties is always ready, the stores, ammunition, arms, &c., in their place, so that they can leave the ship at short notice.

A man-of-war, therefore, on being put 'in commission,' that is having all its officers and men on board, prepares at once for purely naval service. After that may come infantry instruction, what amount is required to prepare bluejackets for any extraneous service that may be required of them on shore. In the *Sailors' Pocket-Book*, by Captain Bedford, R.N., we find skirmishing laid down as of the first importance. In addition to that the company should know how to wheel, form fours to either flank, form to the front or rear, and when perfect in this it is practically efficient. As to battalion drill, all parade movements may be dismissed, and a few sections of the battalion instruc-

tions are all that is necessary to know. It must be remembered that a great deal of a soldier's drill is the means of teaching him discipline ; but that is not necessary for a bluejacket : he is taught it by other forms, though the discipline must be the same.

Besides the drill, there is the internal economy of the landing parties required, which should commence as soon as a ship is in commission. To make this complete as far as possible three things are wanted at present, but a complete equipment will shortly be provided : Water-bottles, leggings, and boots ; boots are carried on board and can be issued when wanted. Leggings must be made ; duck may answer, but thin canvas will be better. If leather leggings can be got, it should be done. For water-bottles, an embargo should be laid on all empty soda-water bottles, none being allowed to be thrown overboard. Our troops in India use them covered with leather, and in a man-of-war they can be 'grafted' over, a canvas sling made, with a canvas cup, and kept white. Having settled on and provided the things that are not supplied by the service, the next thing is to have clear what clothes the men should wear and take with them if landed. On this point comes a difficulty at once, that is the head-dress, the white hat of our bluejackets being wholly and totally unsuited for a hot sun, so that the cap must be prepared with a white cover and fall for the back of the neck ; and referring again to Captain Bedford's book we find the following list of clothes laid down as necessary for a man to wear and take on shore with him. They will wear serge jumper and trousers, flannel, comforter, pair of stockings, boots, cap, shirt, knife and lanyard, and handkerchief. They will carry

rifle, accoutrements, sword and bayonet, &c., 60 rounds of ammunition, and blanket, rolled up in which there is to be a shirt, pair of stockings, and towel. It is in this way, and for the reasons we have stated, that our bluejackets are able to take their place on shore by the side of our soldiers; but the question always arises for those in naval authority to decide, when and under what circumstances their men ought to be landed. In purely naval affairs there is no difficulty; the thing to be done must be done promptly; the ship is the base of operations; there can be no transport, so not more than two days' provisions can be taken; the men must bivouac. It is altogether, as far as arrangements are concerned, within the man-of-war's man's province, and should therefore go easily. The same thing applies to a fort or town being held under the ship's guns; no transport is required, and the men can be provisioned from the ship as well as if they lived on board; but as a rule for the Royal Navy, no shore operations should be undertaken by officers or men unless it comes under the head of purely naval affairs, those connected with the peace and care of civilised communities on the different coasts about the world. The navy has nothing to do with any diplomatic or military display or expedition when it is inland; and in spite of the success which has always attended our bluejackets and marines in any war in which they have assisted, the naval authorities should always set their face against their men being landed for service of any sort on shore. Service in the Royal Navy means service on the sea, where our forefathers have left us a goodly heritage; and disappointing as it might be to see active service

going on quite close and yet take no part in it, it is better to keep men to their *métier* than to let them be mixed up in that of which they can know but little. For when sailors are landed they must be inferior soldiers, which will certainly not make them better sailors. Although we say bluejackets and marines should not be landed except for purely naval work, there may arise occasions when just the reverse holds good, and nothing practically that a man-of-war has belonging to her should be kept on board. Men, arms, ammunition, stores, provisions, everything should be landed; we allude to such cases as the Indian mutiny, the New Zealand wars, the commencement of the Ashantee war, and the Zulu war after the Isandula disaster. In the first and last the safety of the Indian Empire and the Natal Colony depended on as many Englishmen as possible being got together to make a stand. Her Majesty's ships Shannon and Pearl went to Calcutta, diverted from their proper duty; and her Majesty's ship Shah on her way to England, when at St. Helena, turned round and proceeded to the Cape. In both these cases, the ships landed all available men for useful work.

When necessities of this sort arise, the ship or ships are able to land every man for whom arms can be found. Before leaving the ship, the light spars should be sent down from aloft and all sails unbent and stowed away except enough to render the ship safe in a gale of wind. The engine-room establishment should be reduced to its lowest numbers, just capable of working the machinery and driving the ship. The navigating officer, one medical officer, and as few other officers as possible should be left on board, with

enough men to weigh the anchor and make sail as if she were a merchant ship, slowly and piece by piece. The provisions and ammunition for the men landed can be stored, and if necessary any guns or stores that may be required by the military can be parted with. The ship can become a transport and be sent elsewhere for more men; in fact, it should be, as it always has been, the pride of the Royal Navy that there is no limit as to what it places at the disposal of the Governor or General, as the case may be, to save further disaster. The Shannon, in the Indian mutiny, not only landed some of her eight-inch guns, but her artisans, when they were supplied with materials, made the carriages for them, and those guns were at Lucknow. Such things can only be done, it must be remembered, if the war is such that naval operations are out of the question, where there is no coast on which the enemy can be harassed or diverted from the main attack, no towns or stores of supplies that can be destroyed from the sea, where there is no doubt but that the operations must be purely military, and that our territory or the lives of our countrymen are in imminent danger. Then, as was the case in Zululand, we see what a ready service is the Royal Navy, and we find the bluejackets able to take their place in the field as infantry and artillery with good results. But there always comes a time when their services, good as they may be, should cease; and as soon as the danger is over, or the soldiers sent out arrive, then the naval authorities have to say their men must come back to their proper work, however useful they may have been found, and all should return to their ships. It should

be remarked that in any war the navy can probably assist if there is any boat work over rivers, and would do so though it had its own work to do. A few men only are required, and could be spared even with maritime operations to be conducted at the same time.

The naval brigades in Zululand were not a new feature of naval life, as there has scarcely been any war of any sort in which we have been engaged during this century but what some call has been made on and responded to by the Royal Navy. The old war at the beginning of the century was purely on the sea, and yet in that the sailors were at times landed; but having established our supremacy on the sea, and with the long general peace only broken by the Crimean war since, there has been no sea fighting; but in all the little wars we have had in hand, we find the bluejackets and marines on shore helping their brethren in arms. In Burmah, in 1824 and 1852, all the boat service naturally fell to the sailors' lot, but they were also landed as infantry. In Syria, in 1840, we find them assisting at the assault of Acre. In China, in 1841, 1857, 1859, and 1860, we find them in companies and battalions, and with field guns, to say nothing of the river transport. In the Kaffir war of 1851, the marines only were landed, the bluejackets doing the landing work through the surf of a bar river. In the Crimea, the marines of the ships were formed into a battalion; but the bluejackets served in the trenches as part of the siege train. In the Indian mutiny bluejackets and marines served together, the former as infantry and artillery. In the New Zealand wars of 1844, 1845, 1860, and 1862, the bluejackets and marines were landed as infantry, and with field guns

and rockets. In Abyssinia the bluejackets were formed into a rocket battery. In Ashantee, the marines were formed into a battalion, and the bluejackets served as infantry. In the Perak war we find them on shore as artillery and infantry; and we have had them in Zululand as infantry, field and garrison artillery, and working the transport across the Tugela. These services have all been undertaken in connection with regular troops; but at the same time the other services on shore, purely naval, which have had to be undertaken by the navy alone, have been legion. In almost all parts of the world occasions have arisen which have necessitated the landing from one or more ships of an armed party, sometimes for a few hours, at others for some time; hence we see that naval brigades may at any time be formed, that the men and ships are prepared for such service, and that as yet when called on to act as soldiers, except cavalry and horse artillery, they have been found fit for the work. But it must not be supposed that the navy produces soldiers to compare with those who are regularly trained; for with the exception of the marines, who stand *nulli secundus*, it cannot be so, nor is it expected of the men. But a sailor's life gives powers of adaptability; a bluejacket is accustomed to obey orders, and to the use of arms of all sorts; therefore he fits in well to anything that may be required

of him, and being intelligent soon learns new duties. The worst is the bluejacket likes campaigning, as indeed does everyone, though all hate war, so that he soon becomes very useful, and in many cases is kept on shore when he ought to be back in his ship; but it is a fault that must be condoned, though we would wish he was always kept for ship's work. However, the praise he gets is very great; all people are kind to him, correspondents patronise him perhaps too much, and there is invariably a strong approval of his behaviour and services put in orders by the general when he leaves, which testifies to his usefulness.

The French navy, which is perhaps more organised than the English navy, carries out the soldier arrangements for the sailors to a great extent, and we followed with some pride their discipline and gallantry in the Franco-German war. Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, one of their leading officers, has said, 'Though I above all things hold to our proper *rôle* of seamen, I have not the less constantly protested against the opinions of those who despise our landing parties. It would be indeed lamentable if the 5000 or 6000 picked men of a fleet were not always capable of executing a simple reconnaissance, *coup-de-main*, or short expedition.' This opinion is, we think, borne out by the services of bluejackets when serving in naval brigades.

CROSS-PURPOSES.

ABOUT three quarters of an hour after crossing the bridge of Kehl, on the Baden side of the railway from Paris to Frankfort, the traveller arrives at the small but not unimportant station of Appenweier. From here he may, if he elect to abandon the direct route, be transported by means of a branch line to Freiburg and Basle ; or, by taking his seat in a nondescript vehicle, half diligence, half omnibus, awaiting his pleasure at the door of the adjoining restaurant, penetrate into the recesses of the Black Forest, and at the close of an up-and-down-hill journey of two hours through a delightfully picturesque country, be safely landed at whichever of the rival bath establishments he may choose to honour with his preference, Petersthal or Griesbach.

It was to the last-named locality that, on a broiling July afternoon, a year or two before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, a family party, consisting of father, mother, and daughter, voluntary martyrs in a closely packed second-class carriage, were journeying from the neighbouring town of Carlsruhe, with the usual velocity of an ordinary German train. Herr Kanzleirath Piepenhagen, the chief of this little band of pleasure-seekers, was a stout middle-sized personage, considerably on the shady side of fifty, with small twinkling eyes, and a complexion bordering on the cadaverous ; he wore a black alpaca coat and waistcoat, gray trousers of some cheap native fabric, much too short for him, and a straw

hat with a very broad brim ; and on his knee reposed a green carpet-bag, emblazoned with a sprawling 'Gute Reise,' worked in worsted of divers colours.

His wife, sitting immediately opposite to him, was a sharp-featured, sallow-cheeked, beetle-browed dame, whose age might have been anything over forty, and whose general aspect bore a striking resemblance to that of Mrs. Pipchin, as delineated by 'Phiz;' her long lean fingers were busily engaged in the national exercise of knitting, and as if to prove that this occupation was purely manual, and in no degree monopolised her attention, she found leisure, without relapsing into inactivity, to address sundry acrimonious remarks to her liege lord with reference to her sufferings from heat, dust, flies, and other incidental grievances (for all of which, collectively and individually, she evidently held him responsible), and to reply in a less acrid tone to an occasional observation of Fräulein Piepenhagen, ensconced in the corner beside her.

Had Lavater himself been placed face to face with the damsel in question, we doubt whether he would have divined the possibility of any relationship between the particularly unattractive couple whose personal appearance we have endeavoured to depict, and the pretty and graceful girl whose prepossessing exterior, in spite of the ill-fitting cotton-dress and the flaming red shawl from the maternal wardrobe which constituted her travelling costume, contrasted so strangely with the Dutch tum-

bler-like unwieldiness of the Kanzleirath, and the stiff ungainly *tournure* of her lady mother. Fräulein Bertha had soft blue eyes, and a profusion of chestnut hair which, in defiance of the prevailing fashion, she wore in ringlets; her figure was slight, but exquisitely proportioned, and her tiny and well-shaped hands, encased, we regret to say, in a pair of yellow thread gloves, might have served as a model for Houbigant or Boivin. So much for the *physique* of our heroine; when we add that she was of an amiable disposition, tolerably accomplished, and not altogether deficient in that tinge of sentimentalism peculiar to the maidens of the Fatherland, we shall have described her with sufficient accuracy.

The longest and most tedious journey—even on a German railway—comes sooner or later to an end; after divers halts at Rastadt, Oos, Achern, and other intervening villages, the train at length slowly neared the station of Appenweier, and the Kanzleirath, who had been enjoying a fitful repose for the last quarter of an hour, received intimation of the fact by means of a sharp application of his wife's parasol on the calf of his leg.

'Herr je!' he exclaimed, starting up, and flattening his straw hat by coming in contact with the top of the carriage. 'What's the matter?' he added, rubbing his eyes with his knuckles.

'Tickets ready!' sternly replied the Kanzleiräthin, 'and don't be all day about it.'

Before many minutes had elapsed the party were duly installed in the interior of the Eilwagen; the luggage was securely packed on the roof, and the driver had already gathered up his reins preparatory to starting, when an individual in a fustian jacket, re-

presenting alternately the waiter, boots, and ostler of the establishment, signalled to him to stop.

'Don't be in a hurry, Schwager,' he said; 'there's another passenger going with you.'

He had hardly finished speaking, when a young man, dressed in a suit of light-coloured tweed, and carrying a small portmanteau in his hand, emerged from the open door of the restaurant, and, glancing carelessly as he passed at the family trio inside the vehicle, took his seat on the coach-box, lit a cigar, and threw a piece of money to the expectant waiter.

'Danke schön, Herr Baron,' shouted that functionary, as the Eilwagen slowly rolled away.

When they were fairly in motion, the Kanzleiräthin gave her husband a nudge with her elbow.

'Did you hear that?' she inquired.

'Hear what?' murmured her spouse in a provokingly indifferent and drowsy tone.

'Nein!' exclaimed the indignant lady, 'das ist zu stark! As I live, the man's half asleep again!'

'I heard, mother,' interposed Bertha, anxious to prevent any further discussion; 'the waiter said, Herr Baron. Do you suppose he is going to Griesbach, or only to Petersthal?'

'To Griesbach, of course,' replied Frau Kunigunde decisively, with a look worthy of her imposing name. 'No one who has any pretensions to good society would think of staying at such a hole as Petersthal.' (It is probable that, had the Kanzleiräthin been bound to Petersthal, she would have said the same of Griesbach, but this by the way.)

'I wonder if he is really a Baron?' continued her daughter in a low whisper.

'Baron! pooh, nonsense!' growled Herr Piepenhagen, who, being at that moment sorely harassed by a persistent blue-bottle, had overheard the remark, 'waiters will call any one Baron for six kreutzers!'

'Idiot!' muttered his lady wife, with a contemptuous shrug of the shoulder; after which display of conjugal endearment she relapsed into a haughty silence, which lasted with few interruptions until they reached the much-calumniated Petersthal.

To the great delight of at least two of his fellow-travellers, the stranger manifested no present intention of taking up his quarters at the *pension*, at the door of which the conductor of the Eilwagen made a short halt, on the chance of securing a stray recruit or so for the remaining portion of his journey. No such volunteer, however, putting in an appearance, and the 'Herr Baron,' who had descended from his perch for the purpose of holding a brief conference with the landlord, with whom he was evidently well acquainted, having reascended to his seat, the ponderous vehicle resumed its course anew, and in little more than half an hour finally deposited its weary passengers at the hospitable portals of Herr Jockerst, proprietor of the establishment at Griesbach.

While the Piepenhagen family are reposing after their fatigue in the clean but sparingly furnished dormitories luckily reserved for them, every other nook and corner in the house, with the exception of a diminutive cell about the size of a Calais steamer deck-cabin, also retained for their travelling companion, being already occupied, it may not be amiss to describe as succinctly as possible the *locale* of our story. The three

baths, Rippoldsau, Petersthal, and Griesbach, form a species of triangle of which the latter is the farthest point; it is almost entirely encircled by a range of thickly-wooded hills, intersected by winding paths, and affording at various artistically contrived openings agreeably diversified views over the surrounding country. The large straggling building under the direction of Herr Jockerst may be considered not merely as part and parcel of Griesbach, but as Griesbach itself; inasmuch as, barring a scattered group of neighbouring cottages, it stands completely alone, and is absolutely monarch of all it surveys. Its architecture may be in some respects amenable to criticism, as having no distinct character of its own, and leading one to suppose that the wings and out-buildings had been added to the original structure at subsequent intervals, as a means of satisfying the increasing demand for accommodation; but that this most desirable end has been successfully attained there can be no manner of doubt. The portion of the interior devoted to the requirements of the guests consists, besides the sleeping apartments, of a spacious and lofty hall used indiscriminately as dining- and drawing-room; and here, in accordance with the primitive habits of the place, the visitors are wont to assemble after supper, and listen to the combined efforts of half-a-dozen musicians attached to the *pension*, whose services are rewarded by a fixed charge inserted as a separate item in the weekly bills.

The baths, the main object of most frequenters of this secluded spot, are disposed in subterranean chambers like cellars in the immediate vicinity of the spring; and in the rear of the premises is

a pleasure garden, abounding in shady walks and sequestered nooks, equally suitable for repose or flirtation. When we have added that the ordinary society of the *pension* Jockerst is mainly composed of families from the adjacent towns of Carlsruhe, Stuttgart, Heidelberg, and Mannheim, attracted thither either by motives of health or economy, we shall have given a tolerably exact idea of the establishment into which our travellers are on the point of being introduced. And be it here parenthetically observed that had not Herr Piepenhagen, whose official salary barely averaged twelve hundred florins, or something like a hundred a year, been recently honoured by a supplementary gratification of two hundred florins, as a special mark of grand-ducal favour, he and his belongings might have sighed in vain for an opportunity of exchanging the dusty, sultry atmosphere of the Residenz for the pine-clad heights and fresh mountain breezes of Griesbach.

As soon as the first sounds of the bell summoning the guests to their evening meal were heard, a general rush took place for the purpose of inspecting the names of the new arrivals, already recorded as follows in the *Fremden-Buch* :

‘Herr Kanzleirath Piepenhagen, with wife and daughter, from Carlsruhe.’

‘Heinrich Rosenberg, from Worms.’

‘Then he is not a baron after all,’ whispered the disappointed Bertha to her mother, as they were adjourning to the supper-room.

‘Who knows, child?’ replied the stately dame. ‘Kings often travel *incognito*, and why shouldn’t barons?’

‘Rosenberg’s a pretty name, at any rate,’ said Bertha.

Whatever might be his social position, it soon became evident that Herr Heinrich Rosenberg was unanimously voted a decided acquisition to the little Griesbach colony. In the first place, he was remarkably good-looking,—*ce qui ne gâte rien*—and had (at least the ladies said so, and if they didn’t know, who should?) a peculiarly aristocratic air, and a bewitchingly fascinating smile; besides, he talked French *almost* without accent, and was always prepared with a choice fund of anecdotes adapted to every variety of hearers, upon which he drew largely for the entertainment of his neighbours at the supper-table. With Herr Jockerst he seemed as entirely at his ease as with the rival autocrat at Petersthal, and displayed so intimate an acquaintance with rare vintages, that on his casually alluding to a certain *Liebfrauenmilch* carefully stowed away in the cellars of the *pension*, which he affirmed to be unrivalled, more than one old gentleman felt unable to resist the temptation, and, deferring to the judgment of so enlightened a connoisseur, ordered up a bottle forthwith.

Meanwhile the Kanzleirath was in the seventh heaven, having discovered among the guests an associate of his youthful days, once the wildest Bursch in the university of Heidelberg, and now a physician with a fair amount of practice at Stuttgart. Dr. Schloesser and his charming daughter Wilhelmina, familiarly called Mina, a sparkling brunette of eighteen, had been for some years in the habit of passing their summers at Griesbach, and were consequently treated by its proprietor with a degree of respect seldom accorded to mere chance visitors; the place of honour at the public table being invariably reserved for the doctor, while the most

desirable bachelors present were monopolised as a matter of course by his pretty companion. Thus it happened that Herr Rosenberg naturally found himself seated between Fräulein Mina and the no less attractive Bertha, who was already on the best of terms with the Stuttgart beauty. Nor was Frau Kunigunde in any way disposed to disturb the universal harmony, being wholly engrossed by the conversation of a congenial spirit in the shape of a hook-nosed and spectacled maiden of eight-and-forty, one of her especial intimates at Carlsruhe. Fräulein Ulrica Bitterzung, irreverently termed by the incorrigible Mina *eine alte Schachtel*—in plain English, an old hag—was not only the main prop and pillar of that fearful institution, the afternoon *Kaffee Gesellschaft*, of which our ‘five-o’clock tea’ is a feeble and comparatively harmless imitation, but as inveterate a scandal-monger and reputation-destroyer as could be met with from one German frontier to another. ‘From early morn to dewy eve’—or as long as daylight lasted—she would sit at her ground-floor window, on the outside of which a mirror was so cunningly fixed as to reflect for the good lady’s recreation, and in a kind of panoramic procession, whoever chanced to pass up or down the street, and afford her, moreover, an inquisitorial peep into the doings of her opposite neighbours. It may be imagined, therefore, with what undisguised rapture the worthy spinster, who had been located at Griesbach for upwards of a fortnight, and who felt her tongue growing rusty from sheer want of exercise, was inclined to welcome the advent of so accomplished a retailer of tittle-tattle as the Kanzleiräthin; and were we to describe their first interview as ‘a character dead at

every word,’ it is possible that we should not be far wrong.

On the removal of the supper-table, the younger members of the company assembled together by common consent at the end of the hall occasionally appropriated to dancing; the musicians struck up a lively measure, and if Herr Rosenberg had previously created a favourable impression by his good looks and captivating manner, it was increased a hundred-fold by the grace and lightness of his waltzing, which was pronounced to be perfectly Viennese. Devoting himself alternately to the *piquante* Mina and the sentimental Bertha, as the only votaries of Terpsichore present worthy of his notice, he profited by each pause in the giddy whirl to whisper soft nothings in his partner’s ear, and then plunged anew into the intricacies of the *deux temps*, until the very fiddlers, being fairly exhausted, struck work, and the party broke up.

It must be acknowledged that the ordinary mode of life adopted by the frequenters of Griesbach is strictly primitive and hygienic, and holds forth little inducement to the lovers of gaiety and dissipation. The early breakfast, the baths and the prescribed regimen of the waters, the one-o’clock dinner, and the evening meal succeed each other day after day with uniform regularity; while the out-door amusements are chiefly confined to a stroll in the garden or an occasional ramble on the adjoining hills. It necessarily follows, therefore, that the guests, being thrown more or less on their own resources, are disposed to be mutually sociable, and that the customary ceremonies of introduction are to a certain extent, if not altogether, dispensed with; it being of course understood that

acquaintance thus commenced *n'engage à rien*, and may be dropped *ad libitum* on any future meeting by either party concerned. This facility of intercourse, combined with his own personal qualities, may in some measure account for the exceptional popularity enjoyed by Herr Rosenberg almost from the very instant of his arrival; but it is only fair to add that he did his best to deserve it, and strove by every means in his power to render himself generally agreeable. He was always the first to propose some new excursion or to start some topic of conversation likely to interest his hearers. He could talk politics with the old, and descant on the last literary or theatrical novelty with the young; nay, he pushed his complaisance so far as to win Fräulein Bitterzung's heart by confiding to her private ear divers slightly unorthodox anecdotes (invented on the spur of the moment), which that estimable dame carefully stored up in her memory for the edification of her intimates in the Residenz. In a word he became so universal a favourite that whenever, as frequently happened, he paid a flying visit, on the plea of urgent business, to Petersthal or Rippoldsau (though what business he could possibly have at either place puzzled the society extremely), his return was looked forward to with as much anxiety as if the welfare of the entire community depended on it.

'I can't imagine what takes him away so often,' said the Kanzleirath, during one of these absences to his friend Schlosser; 'the Grand Duchess isn't at Rippoldsau just now, and there can't be a soul worth speaking to at the other place.'

'Bah!' remarked the doctor; 'I'll wager there's a sweetheart in

the case. Young men will be young men, you know.'

Herr Jockerst, who was standing by, smiled significantly, but said nothing.

We strongly suspect, however, that neither Fräulein Piepenhagen nor her merry companion, had they been present at the time, would have refrained from indignantly protesting against so monstrous a supposition, as an unwarrantable insult to the fair ladies of Griesbach in general, and their own pretty selves in particular. Each of them being thoroughly convinced that she alone was the magnet capable of inducing the handsome stranger to prolong his stay in so uncongenial a desert—for he was notoriously sceptical as to the medicinal virtues of the baths, and steadfastly declined even to taste the waters—they would have ridiculed, as it doubtless merited, the idea of an equally potent counter-attraction existing elsewhere. Not that either had in reality any proof positive that she was the exclusive object of his preference, his attentions having been hitherto confined to those vague and indefinite gallantries which may mean a great deal or nothing; but the language of the eye has a peculiar eloquence, and they both fancied, rightly or wrongly, that he only awaited a favourable opportunity to express the feelings which his admiring glances had already (in their opinion) sufficiently manifested.

As far as Fräulein Schlosser was concerned, this state of things might have lasted *ad infinitum*, the damsel being as yet completely heart-whole, and a dead hand at flirtation into the bargain; looking upon matrimony as an eventuality to be postponed as long as practicable, but not the less determined to hold her own against all comers and at all hazards,

whenever circumstances should render the sacrifice necessary.

With Bertha the case was more serious; she had neither the worldly experience nor the prudential foresight of Mina, but was too apt, in love matters especially, to follow the dictates of her own susceptible nature and attribute perhaps an undue importance to what M. de Talleyrand appropriately characterises as 'first impressions.' Since the day of her *rencontre* with the supposed Baron at Appenweier and their simultaneous arrival at Griesbach, she had allowed her imagination to indulge in certain visionary and ultra-romantic fancies, of which he was of course the hero and she as inevitably the heroine; and had ascribed to every chance word or look subsequently addressed to her by Heinrich Rosenberg a signification, which she flattered herself, not without reason, no one else could by any possibility have divined. Her conviction that he was not what he pretended to be was strengthened by the oracular decision of Frau Kuni-gunde, who, having once made up her mind that he must be a nobleman in disguise, would not have abandoned her darling theory for an empire; more particularly as her husband was of a contrary way of thinking. It was, indeed, mainly in a spirit of opposition to that gentleman that she had complacently encouraged her daughter's evident predilection for their former fellow-traveller, hoping thereby to put a stop to a proposed arrangement which had been frequently talked of previous to their leaving Carlsruhe.

The Kanzleirath's salary being, as before stated, extremely moderate, and his private fortune *nil*, the discovery of a suitable *parti* for Bertha had naturally become an object of paramount impor-

tance; and an opportunity had lately presented itself, which, if not in all respects satisfactory, was too advantageous to be rejected without due consideration. Herr Schneegans, or, to give him his full official title, Herr Unter-Assessor-Substitut Schneegans, a promising young bachelor of eight-and-thirty or thereabouts, deriving a fair income from his post, and enjoying moreover a comfortable independence of his own, had for some time held a prominent position among the admirers of Fräulein Piepenhagen, and in a recent interview with her father had declared his intentions and wishes in the most unequivocal manner. Now had the offer been made in the first instance to the Kanzleiräthin, it is more than probable that she would have jumped at it, and the consent of Bertha, as the principal party concerned, being taken for granted, the course of Herr Schneegans's love would have run as smoothly as he could have desired; but her ideas on the subject not having been consulted, she felt it her bounden duty, if not to impose an absolute veto, at least to throw as much cold water on the project as she conveniently could. 'For,' as she shrewdly remarked to her inseparable *confidante*, Fräulein Bitterzung, 'an assessor is no great catch after all, and the young man here *may* mean something. If the worst comes to the worst, we can always fall back on Herr Schneegans.'

Whether the young man alluded to meant anything or not, it is certain that he had no objection to officiate as cavalier in ordinary to two such attractive damsels as Bertha and Mina; and even the latter, careless and light-hearted as she was, could not help feeling flattered by the homage which, to do him justice, he dis-

tributed to one and the other with the strictest impartiality. We may judge, then, of their feelings when one night after supper, during a pause in the conversation, he quietly announced his departure for Frankfort on the ensuing afternoon. Had a thunderbolt fallen among the assembled company, they could hardly have been more startled; protests against so unexpected a desertion arose from all parts of the hall, and every argument that could be urged to induce him to prolong his stay was tried, but in vain. Business, he said, must be attended to; he had already outstayed his time, and despite his reluctance to tear himself away from so agreeable a society, there was no help for it, and go he must. Rising as he spoke, with the pretext of necessary correspondence as a reason for his withdrawal, but in reality anxious to escape further importunities, he left the room, and repaired to the private apartment of Herr Jockerst, with whom he remained closeted until the other guests had retired to rest.

'Bring him to book to-morrow before he starts,' whispered Frau Kunigunde to her daughter, as they separated at the doors of their respective bedrooms.

Poor Bertha smiled faintly, and said she would do her best.

On the following morning after breakfast, profiting by a momentary absence of her friend Mina, Fräulein Piepenhagen slipped unnoticed into the garden at the back of the house, and established herself and her embroidery-frame on a bench commanding a good view of the *pension*. She had not been there long when the sound of footsteps hastily approaching on the gravelled path caught her ear, and in another instant Heinrich Rosenberg was at her side.

'Pardon me, Fräulein,' he began, 'for thus intruding on your solitude, but I could not quit Griesbach without expressing my deep regret to those in whose society I have passed so many happy hours, and to none more sincerely, more truly, than yourself. My minutes are counted, but before I go I must see and speak with the Herr Kanzleirath; I have a request to make, which I hope and believe he will grant, in which case one of the principal objects of my stay will have been attained. As I trust ere long to have an opportunity of visiting Carlsruhe, I will not say adieu, but *auf Wiedersehen*.'

With these words, and a lingering glance at the blushing maiden, whose emotion had prevented her from uttering a syllable in reply, he lifted his hat respectfully, and hurried down the alley by which he had arrived, leaving Bertha in a state of agitation easier to imagine than to describe. How long she remained absorbed in her reflections—very pleasant ones apparently—she knew not; but after a while she felt a gentle hand on her shoulder, and looking up beheld Fräulein Schlosser, all smiles and good humour, but seemingly more excited than usual.

'What is the matter, mein Schatz?' asked Mina. 'I have been searching for you everywhere, for I have a bit of news that will surprise you. He is gone to speak to papa.'

'I know he is,' replied Bertha in a low voice. 'He told me so himself.'

'Told *you*?' echoed Mina, staring with astonishment; 'what could he be thinking of?'

It was now Bertha's turn to stare.

'Why shouldn't he tell me that he was going to ask papa's consent?' she said.



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'Did he say that?' inquired Mina, rather sharply.

'Not those very words,' answered Bertha; 'but of course that is what he meant.'

'Then, *meine liebe*, you must have misunderstood him. It was *my* papa he alluded to, not yours. I have it from his own lips; he called him Herr Doctor.'

'To me he said Herr Kanzleirath,' retorted the other.

'I can't make it out,' said Mina, 'unless the man's a Turk, and wants to marry us both. Come with me; my father and yours are playing chess in the little arbour yonder, and I can't rest till I know who is right.'

So saying the impetuous young lady darted off at a rapid pace, followed by Bertha, in the direction of the snug retreat where the two old gentlemen were comfortably enjoying their game.

'Is Herr Rosenberg gone, papa?' was Mina's first question, when they arrived quite out of breath.

'Gone!' exclaimed the doctor. 'Yes; a quarter of an hour ago. He wouldn't wait for the omnibus, but borrowed Jockerst's gig, as he wanted to catch the early train.'

'Did he ask you anything before he went?'

'How curious you are this morning, puss!' laughingly replied Herr Schlosser. 'Well, if you must know, he did ask me something.'

'And what answer did you give him?'

'I told him I had no particular objection.'

'There, you see!' cried Mina, with a triumphant look at Bertha. 'Didn't I tell you so?'

At this moment Frau Kuni-gunde and Fräulein Bitterzung, who had been strolling down an adjoining walk, approached the group.

'But surely, papa,' said Bertha to the Kanzleirath, 'he asked *you* something too?'

'So he did, my dear,' answered her father.

'And you told him?'

'I told him I was much obliged, but that he had better try somebody else.'

'You said *that*, Gottlieb,' interposed his wife in her deepest and most impressive tragedy tone, 'when your child's happiness is at stake?'

'My child's happiness?' repeated the bewildered Kanzleirath. 'What has she to do with it?'

'Did he not ask you to consent to his marriage with Bertha?' she continued.

At this question Dr. Schlosser, who had been staring at one and the other alternately, burst into a sudden fit of laughter, and even the unfortunate Kanzleirath ventured on a feeble smile.

'He asked me to allow him to send me a couple of casks of Liebfrauenmilch,' said the latter, and I thought it too dear. Schlosser has ordered one, but then he can afford it, and I can't.'

'Either you must have lost your senses, or I mine,' disdainfully remarked Frau Kunigunde. 'Perhaps you will kindly inform me who is Herr Rosenberg?'

'Neither more nor less than the travelling agent of Propf & Keller, wine merchants at Worms,' replied the doctor, stifling his merriment as well as he was able. 'I could have told you that a week ago, if you had asked me. And all I can say is, if what he sends me is equal to the sample we tasted the other evening, I sha'n't complain.'

'His daughter will hardly be of the same opinion,' whispered Fräulein Bitterzung in her friend's ear; 'unless, like Bertha, she has a Schneegans to fall back upon!'

NOVEMBER.

THE brown leaves lie a hundred deep,
The bare boughs toss their arms on high ;
There is a cold look in the sky,
And fierce winds o'er the woodlands sweep.

At eventide the valleys fill
With mist, that does not pass away ;
The drizzling rain falls all the day,
And patters on the window-sill.

A dismal dampness haunts the morn,
A dewy coldness fills the e'en ;
The sun behind a veil is seen,
And all the mountains look forlorn.

The trout in sulky waters lie,
The grouse are wild upon the moor ;
The beauty of the ling is o'er,
And barren acres meet the eye.

At night the stars look weirdly bright,
And meteors cross the frosty sky
And vanish, ere the startled eye
Hath time to mark their trail of light.

The dormouse sings his farewell song
Before he seeks his winter rest ;
The wild doves come with crimson breast,
And o'er the wheaten stubbles throng.

The daisy, in some sheltered place,
Looks up more meekly to the light ;
And all fair Nature shows the blight
November lays upon her face.

J. T. B. W.

A BETTING EXPERIENCE.

I HAD often been asked by my friend Bernard Snipe to take an interest in horse-racing—or rather in betting. For months I had resisted tempting offers of assistance and advice which were to make my fortune. The fact is, I knew nothing whatever about horse-racing, and I had no money to spare to pay for a practical experience of the ‘art’ of betting. Bernard Snipe had, on the other hand, made a study of ‘book-making.’ He was the deputy station-master at an old borough town on one of the chief lines in the kingdom. He betted with passengers and he betted with railway clerks, and for a time he ‘skinned’ them pretty much as he pleased.

It was in September 1861 that he prevailed upon me to go to Doncaster to see the Great St. Leger race. I consented to visit the famous course more for the sake of the ‘sight’ than for the betting. However, in order to enjoy a little of everything, I put three pounds ten into my pocket; and on the Wednesday when the Leger was run for, I was conveyed in a special train to Doncaster. My railway fare and dinner absorbed ten shillings of my cash, and with the remaining three pounds I proceeded to the course. I remember seeing the first race won by Count Lagrange’s Cosmopolite. I saw large sums of money change hands, and I at last thought I might win a ten-pound note on the Leger. I looked round for Bernard Snipe, but he had left me. I could not find him, though I searched everywhere for him. I returned to the quarters occupied by the betting

fraternity, and I could hear the praises of Kettledrum sounded above all the rest of the horses. Kettledrum was the favourite in the betting, and consequently I made him my favourite by investing all my three pounds in his cause. At length the horses came out for their preliminary ‘canter.’ Kettledrum was pointed out to me, and I almost worshipped the animal. ‘They’re off!’ was the first cry I heard; and after considerable excitement there were immense cries of ‘Caller Ou wins! Caller Ou wins!’ and to my utter astonishment Caller Ou did win. The thought suddenly flashed upon me that I was eighty miles away from home, had lost the only friend I knew, and had not a farthing in my pocket towards paying my railway fare. I was in a strange place; I was almost in despair. I wandered about the refreshment booths to ascertain if any one I knew was there. I was not successful. I recalled the days of my boyhood, when I begged sixpence from my father on a fifth of November. In the evening he asked me what I had done with the money.

‘Spent it in fireworks,’ was my reply.

‘What, spent it in sparks! A fool and his money soon parted.’

I came to the conclusion that I had once more made a fool of myself by visiting Doncaster, and a still greater fool of myself by staking three pounds on the lottery of a horse-race, and leaving myself without the means of getting home.

Suddenly I was tapped on the shoulder. I turned round, and to my delight I beheld Bernard Snipe.

'Well, how have you gone on?' he asked.

'Lost every farthing of my money,' was my disconsolate reply.

'What did you back?' he inquired.

'Kettledrum.'

'Kettledrum! What a fool you've been! Why didn't you ask me about it? He wasn't in the race. The rain had made the course too heavy for him,' run on critical Bernard.

'It's all very well to tell me these things now the mischief is done,' I remarked. 'I know I've made a fool of myself by coming here at all. Lend me half a sovereign and I'll make the first loss the last, and go home by the next train.'

'Not me, old boy,' he replied; and then, in an encouraging tone, he said, 'Look here; they're betting 8 to 1 against Cosmopolite for the Corporation Plate. I am going to put two sovereigns on it. If you like to put a sovereign on it, I'll lend you the money.'

'No, no; once bitten twice shy,' I answered. 'Cosmopolite won the first race, and they'll never let the same horse win two races in one day.'

'It's right, I tell you. I have a friend in Count Lagrange's stable, and he has given me the "tip,"' put in Bernard.

'Well, I'll never pay you back if I lose,' I informed him.

'I'll trust you for that,' he remarked, as he ran off towards a betting-man who was under a huge umbrella bawling to a crowd of people in front of him.

Presently he returned and handed to me a small ticket, at the same time informing me that if the horse won I must present the ticket to the man with the umbrella, and he would hand me nine sovereigns.

The bell rung to clear the course. Again there was the preliminary canter. Once more a score of voices from behind field-glasses cried out, 'They're off!' I became fearfully excited; but when I heard shouts from all sides that 'Cosmopolite wins!' I scarcely knew how to control my delight. Cosmopolite did win. I was the first individual who accosted the man with the umbrella, and having presented the ticket he handed me nine sovereigns. At about the same moment, Bernard Snipe came up and received eighteen sovereigns. I returned him the sovereign he had advanced for me, and at once darted into the middle of the crowd. He called after me; but I would not heed him. I ran as fast as a race-horse to the railway-station. In a quarter of an hour I was on my return journey home. I called to see a friend at a large town in the Midlands, and I ordered a new suit of clothes and a hat. I paid cash, and received the usual discount. In another hour I was at home with just the same amount of money in my pocket as I had started with in the morning.

In my new suit I was married in about a month afterwards.

Whilst I was enjoying the honeymoon, I received a letter from a friend. In it I read the following passage:

'Bernard Snipe, through his love for betting, has become involved. He has embezzled 360*l.* belonging to the railway company, and bolted to Australia.'

Then I related the above story to my bride.

'You'll never bet again, will you?' she asked, as she patted me on the cheek.

'Never, my dear!' And I have kept my word. W. H. H.

LOST AND MISSING.

AMONGST the many curious phases of human existence, none are invested with a greater degree of interest than those which relate to the occasional disappearance of society's units, and which deal with the circumstances attending their absence from the circle or sphere in which they have lived and moved. Statisticians tell us that a surprising number of individuals disappear mysteriously each year from the circle of their acquaintance; and police records similarly inform us of the large proportion of such cases in which no clue is obtained to the whereabouts or existence of missing men and women. Indeed, from all accounts it seems a tolerably easy matter to get lost beyond recognition or finding; and the annals of detective science are no better prepared with an answer to the query about missing persons than ordinary society would be to reply to the familiar question, 'What becomes of the pins?' It will be understood that we are referring to those cases of inexplicable disappearance in which no adequate reason can be assigned, in the first instance at any rate, for the mystery of absence. True, as we shall presently note, this mystery may be explained in the plainest but saddest fashion by the discovery of the missing body; although, as the sequel will show, the records of medical jurisprudence teem with examples wherein the identity of the lost individual becomes a matter of the gravest doubt and uncertainty. And thus we note that amongst the unwonted phases of human

life there stand forth prominently those in which, first, a case of disappearance gives rise to the vain search or to the discovery of the missing body, and in which, secondly, science appears to assist in the work of identification—this latter being in many cases a difficult and sometimes a hopeless labour, impeded, as we shall see, by the grim and even ludicrous force of circumstances. The well-worn adage that 'truth is stranger than fiction' finds nowhere a better illustration than in the histories stored up in the note-book of the medical jurist. And the notice-boards of a police-station may in their own way furnish the imagination with a more fertile field than has yet been encompassed by the most facile pen of a Hugo or a Sue.

Allusion has just been made to the difficulty experienced in the work of identification, even by the most intimate relations and friends of the missing person. Many examples of this difficulty may be cited; the indefinite nature of the task arising probably as much from the alteration in appearance produced by the 'chilly hand' which sets the features in repose, as from any other cause. The lapse of a few hours after death may effect grave change in the cast or *pose* of the human face, as every doctor knows; and police authorities who have to do with the identification of the dead as well as of the living are accustomed to receive with justifiable care and caution the statements made by most persons in cases of disputed identity.

A comparatively short time ago an instance of this fact was afforded in a northern city. The body of a woman of dissolute habits was found under circumstances which rendered the theory of her having been murdered an extremely probable hypothesis. The question naturally arose as to the name and identity of the victim. Several persons were found ready to declare that the body in question was no other than that of M. N., with whom they had daily associated. Interrogated closely upon this point, they still adhered to the exact statement they had made; and their opinion was supported by at least one fact, namely, that M. N. had not been seen in her usual haunts for some days prior to the discovery of the body. Identification in this case seemed to be little short of a certainty, when it occurred to a shrewd police-officer to make assurance doubly sure by visiting the city-prison, with the view of ascertaining whether the person in question might not be incarcerated within its walls. His search was duly rewarded by the discovery that M. N. was there undergoing a short term of imprisonment, ignorant of the circumstances under which, like some notabilities of our day, she was credited with being 'with the majority' whilst still alive and well. A suggestion gravely made in connection with this case, that the body was that of a certain person A. B., was indignantly refuted by A. B. herself walking into the police-station and confronting her anxious friends.

But the apparent impossibility of identifying even near relations may be aptly illustrated by a reference to a case decided in the Vice-Chancellor's Court so recently as 1865. This latter was a

suit in which the plaintiffs, Holliss, wished to establish the death of a person named William Turner. Turner was last seen alive on the 7th of May 1865, when he was entertained at Guildford. He then presented an emaciated appearance; his mind was unsettled and weak; he was unshaven and suffering from boils and sores, which were dressed at the last-named place. On the 17th of May a drowned body was found in the river Wey, and at the inquest, which was summoned on the 17th, two men named Etherington swore to the corpse as that of their father, who was missing at the period in question. The friends who had entertained Turner at Guildford, on the other hand, declared their belief that the body was that of William Turner; but it was nevertheless duly interred as that of Philip Etherington. On the neck of the drowned man a coloured neckerchief was found; this article assisting in the ultimate identification of the body, which was effected some months afterwards, on Philip Etherington, the supposed drowned subject, walking into his daughter's house. The question who was the drowned man was then revived. The proofs were clearly brought out at last. William Turner had left behind him at Guildford a fragment of a handkerchief; this fragment being found to correspond exactly with the article removed from the neck of the drowned body, and the fact that the sores of William Turner had been dressed at Guildford, recalled to mind the fact that similar traces of disease were discernible on the drowned man. To the Vice-Chancellor's mind the chain of evidence was complete and satisfactory, and judgment was given establishing the identity of

William Turner and the drowned man. Yet the two sons of Etherington were positive as to the identity of the body with their father, who in his turn must have remained utterly ignorant during his absence from home concerning the quandary into which that absence had led his friends and others.

The medical jurist would inform us that the common notion that the human body rapidly decomposes in water is contrary to fact. Especially in winter, and if the body remains below the surface, are the structures well preserved. Identification may therefore be tolerably easy, when otherwise free from embarrassing circumstances, in cases of drowning taking place in winter, and even after some weeks have elapsed. It may also, in some cases, be of positive importance, either as an aid to identification, or for other purposes, to fix accurately the date of the death of an individual. Such a case was tried at the Warwick assizes in 1805, where a suit was entered by the relatives of a drowned man to annul a commission of bankruptcy on the ground that, being already drowned when the commission was issued, it was void in law, and the creditors would therefore have no power to seize the property of the deceased. The drowned man was last seen alive on the 3d of November; the commission was taken out a few days after this date, and on the 12th of December his body was discovered in a river. Five weeks and four days had therefore elapsed between his departure from home and the discovery of the body. No doubt was cast upon the identification in this case, and the question before the court turned upon the date of death by drowning. How could the date be fixed? Nature

in this case afforded a means of at least approximating to the date in question. As part of the chemical changes which the human body undergoes in the course of its decomposition in water or in damp soil, a peculiar substance called *adipocere* is formed. This substance is, in fact, a kind of soap, ascertained to result from the union of the fatty acids of the body with the ammonia also derived therefrom; and when thus converted into *adipocere* the body may retain its condition for lengthened periods of time. The Warwickshire case of the drowned bankrupt exhibited in part the chemical changes resulting in the production of *adipocere*, and the natural question, how long does this substance take to form, came to be raised. Medical evidence adduced at the trial tended to show that a period of about six weeks was, at the very least, necessary for the production of *adipocere*, whilst a very much longer period was required, as a rule. This evidence tended naturally to cause the jury to extend as far as possible, and as far as was consistent with facts, the time the body had lain in the water; an opinion which led to a verdict for the plaintiff, carrying with it the statement that deceased must have been dead during the whole period of nearly six weeks.

Perhaps no chapter in the grim romance of life presents events of more fascinating and mysterious kind than that containing the records of scientific speculation regarding the nature of human remains, which are occasionally brought to light as the first, and it may be the only, witnesses of a grave crime. Here science and the criminal officer go hand-in-hand, to ferret out the dead secrets of crime often with an ingenuity worthy a Vidocq, and with the calculating mind and balancing

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and exhibited no defect in physical conformation. Caroline Welsh was dirty and emaciated, and her feet were so covered with corns and bunions as to present the appearance of being deformed. In dress, however, the two women were very much alike; and more curious still, both possessed baskets of similar make, that of Welsh having a cover, which the basket of Walsh wanted.

It may be said that, with the evidence as to the difference between the women in question, and with positive evidence as to the death of Walsh, little doubt could have existed as to the identity of each. But the confused identity of name, dress, and occupation was effectually set at rest by one remarkable observation, namely, that Caroline Walsh, the murdered woman, was known to possess very perfect front teeth; a fact sufficiently remarkable in a woman of her age to attract the attention even of unscientific observers. Now Caroline Welsh was found to possess no front teeth, and the medical evidence given at the trial proved that the sockets of the front teeth had been obliterated in the hospital patient for a very lengthened period. This latter difference between Caroline Walsh and Caroline Welsh was too typical to be combated by the ingenuity of counsel and by the circumstances which favoured the prisoner's defence; and Elizabeth Ross was found guilty, and duly executed for her crime. It formed a notable fact of this inquiry, that the body of Caroline Walsh was never discovered, although the London dissecting-rooms were duly searched. But the case against Ross was rendered the more conclusive when the grand-daughters of Caroline Walsh, on being shown the remains of Welsh, distinctly al-

leged that the body was not that of their relative.

The difficulty of exactly identifying the remains of a particular person after mutilation has been added to the crime of murder, has unfortunately been more than once fully illustrated by some of the most prominent crimes of recent years. Several historical instances exist, all unfamiliar to the present generation, in which the triumph of science over crime has been signally illustrated. The case of Eugene Aram has formed subject-matter for poem and story, it is true; but the exact details of the crime for which Aram suffered are by no means perfectly or generally understood. Aram was born at Ramsgill, Yorkshire, in 1704. Settling at Knaresborough as a schoolmaster, he became acquainted with Daniel Clark, a shoemaker, who was possessed of certain valuables, and who was alleged to have been murdered by Aram and another. Clark disappeared in February 1745, and Aram was shortly thereafter arrested on suspicion of having been concerned in his disappearance, but was acquitted from want of evidence. Eventually, Aram became usher at Lynn Academy, Norfolk, and whilst there engaged his accomplice confessed that certain bones discovered in a cave near Knaresborough in 1758 were those of Daniel Clark. Aram was brought to trial at York in 1759. In his elaborate defence he laid great stress on the difficulties besetting the identification of human remains after such an interval as had elapsed since Clark's death. His pleas in defence were founded on the alleged impossibility of determining the exact nature, sex, and other particulars regarding a skeleton after the lapse of many years. The fracture of the temporal bone found in the

skeleton proved nothing, for was it not probable that the cave may have been a place of burial in olden times, and that the injury might have been produced after death in the spoliation to which graves were frequently subjected? These and like pleas Aram urged in his defence with singular ability; but the confession of his accomplice and the facts of the case overruled his pleas, and he was found guilty and executed, having previously confessed his crime; whilst with strange philosophy he wrote a defence of suicide, and endeavoured practically to defeat justice by carrying his theories into effect.

Two very marked cases in which the lost and missing were the subjects of legal and scientific examination have occurred within the memory of every reader of middle age. These cases are the Parkman tragedy of America, and the famous Waterloo Bridge murder amongst ourselves. Both cases illustrate very typically, not merely the difficulties which beset the question of identification, but also the aid which science may afford in deciding the fate of the lost and missing.

Dr. Parkman, a Boston (U.S.) physician of standing, was traced, on the 23d of November 1849, to the laboratory of a Professor Webster, a lecturer on chemistry of that city. Thereafter all traces of Dr. Parkman were lost, and the excitement regarding his fate became intense. It would appear that certain pecuniary transactions had taken place between the two persons just named, and that Webster was considerably in Parkman's debt, and was, moreover, in embarrassed circumstances. On Webster's laboratory and its precincts being searched, the haunch-bones, the right thigh, and the left leg of a human body were

discovered. Associated with these remains were several laboratory towels bearing Webster's name. In the refuse and slag of a chemical furnace were found fragments of bones of the skull and of the spine-bones, along with the blocks of artificial teeth and a little melted gold. A further search in the laboratory brought to light a tea-chest in which, disposed amongst tan, and covered over with mineral matters, the trunk of a human body along with the left thigh were contained. These latter parts and the parts previously discovered were found to belong to one and the same body. Pieced together, these relics showed that they formed part of a body of which the head, arms, and hands, both feet, and the right leg from the knee to the ankle were missing, but which at the same time corresponded with the frame of the missing man in every particular. Dr. Parkman, at the time of his disappearance, was sixty years of age. The examination of the skeleton pointed to its being the remains of a man of about the age referred to. Parkman's height was 5 ft. 11 in., and the skeleton pieced out and proportionately measured was found to indicate a height of 5 ft. 10½ in. In these points, therefore, the identity of the remains seemed to be clearly shown. But, as in the case of Caroline Walsh, there were special points in Dr. Parkman's case which served to place the identification well-nigh beyond a doubt. It was quite evident that an attempt to destroy the head by fire had not only been made, but had well-nigh succeeded. The evidence of Dr. Keep, the missing man's dentist, came to the rescue in a very remarkable fashion, after an examination of the remains of the artificial teeth which had escaped the action of Web-

ster's furnace. Keep's evidence was, that four years before the disappearance of Dr. Parkman he fitted artificial teeth in blocks for that gentleman in both upper and lower jaws. The dentist could also speak with certainty to seeing these teeth in Dr. Parkman's mouth about a fortnight before his disappearance, when he had fitted the teeth with a new spring. The artificial teeth rescued from Webster's furnace were sworn to by Keep as those he had made for Dr. Parkman from their fitting the moulds in which the teeth of the latter had been made, and from peculiarities of make. The left side of the lower jaw of Dr. Parkman exhibited a certain irregularity, which was recognised by Keep in the form of the gold plates recovered from the furnace of Webster. Other circumstances combined to weave the evidence strongly around the latter as the perpetrator of a heinous crime. That the remains had not been used for anatomical purposes was abundantly proven by medical evidence; and that murder had been committed was evident from an examination of the chest, which revealed a wound on the left side. Webster was duly convicted by a chain of circumstantial evidence of the most complete kind, and was executed. As an eminent authority in matters medico-legal has remarked on the Parkman tragedy, the refinements and appliances of science may fail in the attempt to destroy a body, or so to mutilate it as to prevent its identification.

Better known from its occurrence in the teeming metropolis of the world, and from the unsolved mystery which still enshrouds the deed, is the Waterloo Bridge murder. A carpet-bag was discovered on a buttress of Waterloo Bridge, London, in the beginning

of October 1857. On being examined, this bag was found to contain portions of a human frame, which had been so treated as to present a veritable illustration of the disposition of Cassim Baba by the robbers in the *Forty Thieves*. In all, some twenty-three portions of the frame were discovered, these being parts of one and the same body. The portions missing were the head, the greater part of the spine, the hands, feet, and left side of the chest; whilst the internal organs were also wanting. The questions submitted to the medical inspectors for the guidance of the police in the investigation of the crime had reference to the sex, age, and height of the deceased; the cause of death; the period which had elapsed between the occurrence of death and the finding of the remains; the state of the body as indicative of its having formed the subject of anatomical research or not; and the presence of any peculiarity, normal or acquired, the discovery of which might lead towards the identification of the body.

These queries were on the whole answered with an accuracy and fulness which bespoke volumes for the patience and skill of the medical inspectors. The remains were those of a man who, judging from the full development of the skeleton, must have attained the age of between thirty and forty years, and must have measured about five feet nine inches in height. The person was probably dark haired, judging from the colour of the hair of the wrists and knee. The cause of death was plainly apparent. A stab had been inflicted between the third and fourth ribs on the left side of the chest, and in such a situation as to have penetrated the heart, whilst the appearance of the wound led the inspectors to de-

clare that it must have been inflicted during life, or immediately after death; the former alternative being that most consistent with the facts of the case. The cause of death was, therefore, seen to be perfectly consistent with the theory of murder, and that of a very deliberate type. Equally important for the purposes of the detective was it to fix the probable date of the commission of the crime; but on such a point speculative rather than actual evidence alone could be offered. It was noticed that, from the perfect state of preservation of the remains, they must have undergone some preservative process, probably with the view of preventing discovery through their decomposition. They must, in fact, have been boiled and salted, and this latter feature alone may serve to indicate the cold-blooded and deliberate nature of the crime. The fact that the remains had thus been artificially preserved rendered the calculation of the period of death difficult, and in any case uncertain. But from an examination of those portions of the remains which were least affected by the process of preservation, the examiners came to the conclusion that the person might have been dead for three or four weeks prior to their examination of the remains; or, in other words, that the subject of the Waterloo-Bridge murder was probably alive in the latter part of September, or even at the beginning of October, 1857.

Not a particle of evidence was forthcoming to show that the remains had been used for anatomical purposes. On the contrary, the manner in which the parts had been separated, and the clumsy fashion in which parts which could have been readily disjointed with the scalpel were separated with

the saw, proved the murderer to have been thoroughly ignorant of the veriest rudiments of anatomical knowledge. But the practice of the public in frequently rushing to the conclusion that mutilation must of necessity be the work of the medical student, is founded upon an entire want of appreciation of the labour and nicety involved in anatomical study; whilst such a supposition can only favour the escape of a criminal, by distracting attention from the true state of matters, and by thus affording him time and opportunity for escape. In the case of the notorious Greenacre, who in 1837 murdered a woman named Brown in London, and scattered her remains, clumsily separated, as in the Waterloo-Bridge murder, public opinion at first attributed the circumstances to the absurd and unfeeling levity of medical students; and justice was thus impeded, as it was likewise hindered for a time in the case of Dr. Parkman, by a similar supposition. In neither instance could anatomical study have been made the excuse for the appearance of the remains, and still less so in the Waterloo-Bridge tragedy.

In the latter case no peculiarities of structure existed which could have been singled out with a view to the identification of their possessor; and hence, owing largely to the want of this particular kind of evidence—the kind of testimony which tells most favourably in the hands of the detective—the Waterloo-Bridge tragedy, in all its ghastly details, has tacitly passed into the limbo reserved for the undiscovered horrors of our own and other ages. Not a single direct clue was forthcoming as to this mysterious crime. The articles of clothing found in the bag afforded no certain evi-

dence of the nationality of their possessor. They were torn, and stained with blood; and a very distinct stab must have been inflicted through the double collar of an overcoat, this injury probably being of an equally fatal nature with the stab already spoken of as having been inflicted in the chest. The police inquiries appeared to point to the shifting maritime population of the Thames as the most likely source in which a clue to the mystery should be sought. A Swedish sailor was believed to have been the victim; but there were not wanting those who thought then, and think even now, that the crime was of deeper nature than that indicated by the hypothesis of a seaman's quarrel. The care shown in the disposition of the remains was said to be inconsistent with the unskilled ways of sailors, and pointed, along with the circumstances of the death, rather to the revenge of more accomplished assassins. The fate of Count Fosco in Wilkie Collins's *Woman in White* is thus believed to have been that of the victim whose remains came to rest on Waterloo Bridge in 1857. The fact of the deceased having probably been a foreigner, and possibly being in hiding in London from his enemies—on the latter theory of the crime having been one of political revenge—may account for the want of success which met the efforts of the police in tracing his identity. Of the true history of this great crime will the world perchance hear something at some future date, or will it remain for ever buried in the oblivion of mystery? Who can tell?

The presence of peculiarities of various kinds in the bodies of persons who are lost or missing is, as has just been remarked, often of the utmost value in identifying

their remains. A case in point occurred in Scotland, where a skeleton was disinterred from a sandy seabeach, an examination of the remains being duly ordered by the authorities. In the course of the investigation the medical examiners discovered that the lower portion of the spine was diseased, and from the nature of the lesion they were enabled to state that the individual in question must have walked with a marked peculiarity of gait. This clue, patiently followed up, showed that the skeleton was that of a carter, who had been deformed, and who was buried at night in the sand by his friends to avoid the chances of his body being stolen for anatomical purposes by the 'resurrectionists' of his day. A similar case is related by Orfila, the celebrated continental expert, in which a man named Bonino, residing near Montpellier, suddenly disappeared in 1823. In 1826 certain suspicions attaching to the disappearance induced the authorities to examine the garden of one Dimont, with the result of discovering the bones of a human body. Bonino was well known to have laboured under a six-fingered deformity in the right hand, and to have possessed six toes on the left foot. The two smaller toes of the left foot were missing in the otherwise perfect skeleton; but on the fifth toe a surface or hollow, to which an additional toe could have been attached, was plainly discernible. In the right hand the bones of the sixth finger were absent, but the palm-bone supporting the little finger exhibited the appearance of having given support to an extra digit. The left hand and right foot were complete and entire. This evidence, supported by collateral circumstances, told against Dimont and a woman, his partner in the

crime, and both suffered the extreme penalty of the law.

The list of cases in which medical science, aided by the practised and trained common sense of experts, has elucidated many of the apparently inexplicable problems and mysteries of crime, might be indefinitely prolonged. But it may be remarked that not merely in the case of the lost and missing dead does the knowledge of the expert aid the cause of justice. It may happen that in cases involving the identification of the living the final appeal is made to the medical jurist and to scientific knowledge, in deciding upon the changes of structure or appearance which may accompany and mark the varying epochs of human life. Cases have been recorded in which the examination or mere detection of a scar has settled the vexed question of identity, and has freed an innocent man from the perils of unmerited punishment. Such an instance occurred at the Old Bailey in 1834. A man, believed to possess the name of Stuart, was charged with being a returned convict, and with having escaped from transportation. Evidence was given that in 1817 a person of that name was convicted and sentenced. The governor of the gaol in which the convict Stuart was confined testified to the identity of the prisoner at the bar with the convict, and no less certain was the guard of the convict-hulk to which Stuart was consigned that the Old Bailey prisoner was his former charge. Cross-examined on behalf of the prisoner, the guard admitted that the convict Stuart in 1817 possessed a wen on his left hand, and indeed this peculiarity was duly entered in the convict-records as a distinctive mark of the person in question. In answer to the charge preferred

against him, the prisoner stated that he was not the convict Stuart, and that his name was Stipler. Between 1817 and 1834, however, witnesses who might have testified to the truth of his statement had disappeared, and were not forthcoming for the defence. Already the Recorder was prepared to charge the jury, when a singular, and for the prisoner most fortunate, incident occurred. A celebrated surgeon of the day, Mr. Carpue, happened to be seated in court during the trial of the alleged Stuart. Struck with the evidence of the guard of the convict-hulk regarding the presence of a well-marked wen or tumour on the convict's hand, it occurred to Mr. Carpue that this fact could be turned to advantage in the cause of justice. Hurriedly consulting with the counsel for the defence, Mr. Carpue entered the witness-box. He testified, as a surgeon, that the removal of such a wen would entail the presence of an indelible scar as the result of the operation. If the prisoner were Stuart the convict, argued the counsel, either the wen or the scar should be found on his left hand. Both hands of the prisoner were found to be free from wens and from scars alike, whereupon the jury at once acquitted him. In this case a chance accident and the acuteness of the surgeon may be said to have saved an innocent man from a lengthened period of incarceration as a culprit of more than ordinary nature.

The well-known case of Joseph Lesurques, whose misfortune forms the incident on which more than one melodrama and novel has been founded, has recently been brought anew under public notice through Mr. Henry Irving's performance in the *Lyons Mail*, and by his assumption of the dual rôle of Lesurques and his villainous

double. The case actually occurred in France in 1794, and its details are sufficiently well known to obviate the necessity for their repetition here. Charged with robbery and murder, the innocent Lesurques was recognised, identified, and sworn to as the real culprit by various disinterested witnesses. Notwithstanding strong exertions which were made to save his life, and, despite his previous high moral character and probity of conduct, Lesurques was sentenced to death, and executed. Soon afterwards, the real culprit, a man who bore the closest possible likeness to Lesurques, was brought to justice. It was then seen that the similarity in features, stature, build, and manner was so close as to have deceived the witnesses who gave evidence at the trial. On these grounds alone, and as a matter of common recognition and identification, the unfortunate resemblance of Lesurques to the real culprit had unwittingly led them into a 'Comedy of Errors,' which resulted in a legal tragedy as its *dénouement*. But more extraordinary to relate still is the incident, well-nigh unparalleled in the annals of coincidences, that *Lesurques was marked by a scar on the forehead, and by another on the hand, whilst the real criminal likewise possessed similar markings*. Surely 'the grim irony of Fate' could no further go than this, in causing chance likeness to assume a form and to entail consequences so fatal and sad as in the case of Joseph Lesurques.

To the questions involved in the case of persons 'Lost or Missing,' there may be added certain curious considerations respecting the procedure of men and women who voluntarily seek hiding and refuge from fear of the law, or from other circumstances, in which no

fear of legal consequences is apprehended. The story is told of a certain wily cardinal, who, wishing to defeat the emissaries who were sent to discover his secret papers, placed the documents in question in an open envelope on his table, with the result that they were left unheeded and untouched from their mere position, which seemed utterly to disarm suspicion. Whether or not acting intentionally on motives allied to those of the good cardinal, it is perfectly certain that many of the 'lost and missing' members of society have dwelt for months, or even years, close to the very neighbourhood from which they had fled. On this principle, more than one noted criminal has contrived to elude the grasp of the law by remaining quietly beneath the very nose of its officials, whilst the hue and cry sent abroad passed over its actual object dwelling in safety at home. A case was related to the writer of this article in which a person of weak intellect escaped from the house of a medical man, under whose surveillance he had been placed, and caused much trouble and alarm to his friends by his mysterious disappearance. The county police—who are popularly believed to stand in the same relation to the police of cities as do the militia to the regulars—were placed on the alert; rivers and ponds were dragged, hospitals visited, and the disappearance advertised, but all to no purpose. Every trace of him appeared to have been lost; and his relatives had well-nigh given up hope of hearing of him again. Judge of their astonishment when the missing man walked into the house of his medical attendant about a fortnight afterwards, dirty, unkempt, and unshaven, and satisfying their query with the remark,

'O, I've been hiding in the stable-loft;' the said place of temporary residence being a disused loft where he had lain concealed amidst the straw and hay, and from which he had made periodical excursions to confiscate or to purchase provisions with a small store of money with which he had provided himself. Such is the cunning of the insane, which, in its extreme simplicity of ways and means, may often prove more than a match for the dexterity of the astute and the wise.

Beyond the explicable cases of mysterious disappearances, however, there remains, as we have seen, a large proportion of instances in which the fate of numerous individuals remains apparently an impenetrable mystery. Amidst the uncertainties of life, none appear more chilling than those which hedge the present

subject, and which point out the unknown and unknowable elements involved in the disappearance of human units from the sum-total of society, never again to reappear, and whose fate is buried in an obscurity that defies our utmost efforts in the way of penetration. Too frequently, it may be feared, the old apothegm 'Murder will out' is merely a dead letter after all; but the course of events, and especially of criminal life, also teaches us the wholesome truth, that often in ways unlooked for, and through means undreamt of, the Nemesis of crime stalks its victim down. And in such a work, equally with the diffusion of sweetness and light in more æsthetic ways, it may well prove a source of satisfaction that science is able and willing in no small degree to assist and share.

A. W.

PROFESSIONAL BEAUTIES.

IN the study of the development of civilisation it is curious to observe the changing fashions of the hour and the vagaries indulged in by human nature. As each century has its special characteristics, so each generation amuses itself by asserting its special fancies. We have had the age of the barons, when doughty deeds and chivalrous feats were the great objects of a mundane ambition and the sole passport to fame. We have had the sacerdotal age, when intellect was cribbed and confined by the restraining influences of superstition, and the lore of the schoolmen was the only study to be pursued. We have had the Augustan age, when poets drew handsome salaries from the Treasury, and satirists were rewarded with high office, and essayists filled the diplomatic service. We have had the military age, when nations were actuated by the greed of aggrandisement and a 'scientific rectification' of their frontiers; the dissipated age, when sensuality was mistaken for love, and revelry for enjoyment; the age of the scheming politician, the age of the effeminate dandy, the age of hard drinking, the age of bribery and corruption; and now it has been reserved for the latter part of this nineteenth century to usher in the æsthetic age. Art, and that burlesque of Nature which some people also call art, have been raised aloft as the tutelary deities of the nation, and their temples are crowded with worshippers. We are nothing unless artistic. A church may be well built, may be sound,

may be well lighted and replete with accommodation; but unless it has been 'restored' according to the approved rules of Gothic teaching, it is useless as a fane for fashionable devotion. Not a tradesman who betakes himself to his suburban villa but must have his furniture planned after what he is pleased to call the 'mid-devil' style. Our modern youth stand aghast at the upholstery abominations which satisfied their inartistic parents, and can alone be appeased by curious wall-papers, blue china, Chippendale chairs, Venetian mirrors, ecclesiastical chandeliers, and all the freaks and whims of decorative industry. Provided anything be 'good art' it is idle to comment upon its inutility, its ugliness, its discomfort, or its inconsistency with its surroundings.

And it must be admitted that 'good art' offers its disciples a wide range of thought, and a sphere of activity which practically has no limits. All is considered fish that falls within the artistic net, if it only have the good fortune to number a few eccentric admirers, to receive the praise of intellect, or to be remarked upon by a distinguished personage. A painting may be blotched and blurred, a figure may be scandalously out of drawing, a poem may be incomprehensible, or a building may be all gables and corners; but if it meet with the approval of one of the endless coteries into which art and the caricature of art have divided themselves, it is certain to be admired, and the artist, author, or architect to be looked upon as

'a new teacher.' Variety is charming, and in the multitude of counsellors we are told there is wisdom. On one side we are taught to admire the fleshly school, on the other all that is diaphanous and spiritual. Here we are surrounded by the disciples of pre-Raphaelitism, and there we have to listen to the sneers against a servile admiration of Nature. Men whom we have regarded as geniuses are run down to the lowest depth of disparagement and branded as being utterly 'deficient in true art.' The great painters of the past, the great poets of the past, the great sculptors of the past, are bidden to hide their diminished heads and to make room for the new lights of our generation, who alone are worthy to illumine the temples of art and of culture. In former days the most faithful interpretation of Nature was considered art; we now are wiser, and any eccentricity, if only approved of by fashion, need not despair of being classed as 'art.'

From the inanimate in art to the animate is but in the natural order of progression. When the canvas and the marble have their admirers, it is only to be expected that the noblest as well as the most graceful work in creation should be treated with supreme homage. The female figure divine has no reason at the present day to consider herself among the neglected. In art she is, as she has always been, the favourite model; and in society she is now the great centre of attraction. We have suddenly arrived at the strange conclusion that the original is of more value than the copy. Instead of gazing at the Old Masters, and wandering about galleries to pick up works of art, we go to the fountain-head at once, and seek in boudoir and *salon* for beauty. A lovely woman, or a

woman who enjoys the reputation for loveliness—for the two things are not synonymous—has developed from the toy of the hour or from a passing distraction into a great social force. The professional beauty need not be rich, she need not be highly born, she need not even be well educated, provided she have sense enough to escape from committing any glaring solecisms. All that is required of her is, that her face should be stamped by society with the trade-mark as a great beauty, and her future is assured. Women her superiors in social station will inundate her with cards for dinners and receptions. Rank and fashion will hang about the staircase, to greet her on her entrance and petition for a dance. The favoured seat on the coach will be reserved for her at the meeting of the drags. Artists will vie with each other in inviting her into their studios, in the hope that they will be permitted to transfer the likeness of her beautiful head to their canvases. Milliners will lend the weight of her name to articles of the toilette that they have just brought out. She will be the idol of the hour, and no great social gathering will be considered complete without her presence. What birth was in the old days, what money is in these, so beauty now is to woman. The professional belle takes the *pas* of all her sisters, and is in the possession of advantages from which many of her betters are excluded. It is not therefore surprising that ambitious mothers, conscious that repartee is at a discount and modesty a thing of the imagination, should indulge in every effort to transform their daughters into beauties. Yet the process is both a difficult one and uncertain in its results. In this æsthetic age he would be a bold man who

would foretell the damsel who is to blossom forth into a notorious belle. Are there not numbers of girls to be met with at any ball or garden-party who are in the possession of perfect features, magnificent eyes, golden tresses, winning manners, and splendid figures, yet they are not admitted within the rank of the professional beauty? Why? Compare them with the belle whose name is as a household word in society, and whose photograph is a valuable copyright, and to the mind untutored in the eccentricities of æstheticism it would appear as if the professional beauty were in the comparison at a disadvantage. Yet the beauty of society, though we may think her haggard in face, wanting in refinement, or irregular in feature, passes on her way enveloped in an atmosphere of praise and homage to new triumphs, whilst the lovely outsider is ignored and neglected. To have a face and head that Greuze would worship are not therefore in themselves sufficient to entitle their possessor to enter the circle of the professional beauty. Other gifts must be discovered and other influences brought to bear before success be attained.

We are in this country so the slaves of public opinion, we are so dependent on the judgment of others, we so love to follow and hate to lead, that unless our minds are made up for us either by our social or intellectual superiors we hesitate before expressing our own views upon any subject. The woman, be she girl or matron, who aspires to the position of a professional beauty must thus be launched forth into the world under powerful auspices. If she rely upon the force of her own unaided charms she may as well relinquish the struggle altogether; she will be spared much

jealousy, bitterness, and disappointment. But under the ægis of valuable protection she has various courses open to her. A fashionable artist has it in his power to create any pretty woman in whom he takes an interest into a beauty. He has but to paint her portrait, to speak about his model in society, and to express admiration for the artistic beauties to be found in her face, and the thing is done. She will be sought out, and, unless her position be too humble or her character be tarnished, she will be warmly welcomed and received, and only dropped when she ceases to be the rage. It is in the power of a great dame of fashion to raise any fascinating *protégée* of her own to the position of a beauty. Wherever she goes she talks about her, she states the numbers of offers she has refused, she romances as to the admiration of the artists for her; and thus gradually the beauty is advertised, brought forward, and her claims end by being finally accepted. Again, the dancing division, should it be unanimous in its admiration of a certain face or figure, can by its support and expression of opinion force the fair recipient of Nature's favours into the privileged enclosure of the professional beauty. But the simplest and easiest course of all these to adopt is to be borne along the royal road to the goal of success. To be openly admired by a Prince of the Blood, to be seen on his arm at receptions, to accept his escort in the Row, to make one in an exclusive quadrille or cotillon, to have one's witty remarks and rejoinders passed from lip to lip in the boudoir and the club, to be the courted guest at country houses where Royalty attends,—and the professional beauty is not only created, but she occupies the uppermost seats

in the assembly of her sisters. We are living under a plutocracy, and ostentation and exhibition have a market value to which hitherto they have been strangers. It may strike the minds of some that to be constantly the subject of comment, to be the incessant object of attraction, and to hand over the expression of one's face and the poses of one's figure to the photographer, are scarcely consistent with that modesty and sensitiveness which poets and the inexperienced have generally associated with the fair sex. Still, if the husbands do not object, why should society? Beauty has forced bullion to beat a retreat. He who is rich need not go friendless, says the Latin grammar; but he whose wife is a beauty, says the breviary of Belgravia, is sure of troops of friends.

The name by which society designates these, its latest *protégées*, aptly hits off their duties and position. We have had political beauties, women who in the fierce days of bribery and corruption gave a kiss for a vote, and used the power they possessed to further the ends of the parliamentary candidate they affected. We have had intellectual beauties, women whose aim it was to fill their *salons* with all the talents, and to stimulate the efforts of genius by their patronage and encouragement. There has been a time in our history when even venal beauties were not unknown; but it has been reserved for the latter part of this nineteenth century to make us acquainted with the *professional* beauty. And she is professional. What his tongue and knowledge of the law are to the barrister, what anatomy is to the surgeon and medicine to the physician, what art is to the painter and the sculptor, what mechanics are to the engineer, her beauty is

to the professional belle. It is her stock-in-trade, and often her sole credentials for social support. There is nothing of the shyness, the indecision or lack of confidence of the amateur about her. It is the object of the professional belle always to be *en évidence*. The art of the photographer must be enlisted in her favour; the 'society journals' must chat about her dress and movements; she must furnish talk for club smoking-rooms, and be a fruitful source of gossip for fashionable boudoirs; malice, bitter misconstructions, feuds, jealousies, to these she does not object, for they keep her name before the public, and act only as so many advertisements of the new calling she has taken up. There are women who might object to have their portraits suspended in the shop-windows between photographs of a nude Zulu and a half-nude actress, for every passer-by to criticise and examine. Not so the professional belle. 'My face is my fortune, sir, she says;' and so when one pose or one dress or one expression has been sufficiently circulated throughout the land, thanks to the medium of the photographer, we are treated to another pose or another dress or another expression, and so on *ad infinitum*. There are some ladies who would regard it as the gravest insult to be the constant theme of men's conversation and women's comments, and to have their sayings and doings discussed as if they were so much public property. Not so the professional belle. She knows how to dress, she is a great social power, she enjoys the homage of the sterner sex. What does she care for the spite and the strictures of women, of women, too, upon whom she has only to smile to turn them into her most abject of slaves? She is the idol of the hour, and

the more exposed her shrine and the more discussed her charms, the greater will be the throngs of those who come to worship her or to stare at her. Her vanity is unbounded, and because she is Fashion's pet everything is to be permitted her. She is often very rude to those of her own sex who are infinitely her superiors, and she loves to snub a man, not because she dislikes him, but because she loves to exhibit her power with all the caprice and want of consideration of the petty tyrant. She surrounds herself with a little court of admirers, who generally accompany her to the dances and garden-parties she honours with her presence. It is well she should have some one, for the professional beauty, though always a married woman, is a jewel of such magnificence as to dispense almost entirely with the setting of a husband. We are given to understand that the husband is somewhere about, but where he is or what he does or what he has is a matter of such indifference to society that it is really beneath inquiry. On the very few occasions when allusion is made to him he loses his own individuality, and is addressed as the husband of Mrs. A. or of Lady B. But we cannot have everything in this world, and when men draw such a prize as a professional beauty out of the matrimonial lottery they must not grumble. Still there are, perhaps, a few ignoble souls who are grateful that their wives, if beauties, are not professional beauties, and who have the bad taste to prefer the privacy of domesticity to the notoriety of heroine-worship.

Yet beauty-bitten as we are, is it aught else than a fashion? and like all fashions—like skating on wheels or last year's bonnets—to-day the rage, and to-morrow for-

saken for a newer and more amusing toy? Those who hold their empire through the caprice of Fashion possess a tenure of power which is seldom of long duration; we have seen 'lions' of the most leonine character one season, who, the next, have been regarded but as the most ordinary of the domestic animals. The professional beauty is, therefore, not altogether one of the foolish virgins in acting upon the principle of making hay whilst the sun shines. And it must be admitted that that fiery orb does shine upon her at the present moment with a force and lurid glow which is dazzling in the extreme. In London the professional beauty queens it wherever she goes. Not a ball is a success without her presence, or that of her sisters. At dinner she eclipses rank, wealth, and fame, and is the object of attentions which would be flattering were they less curious and obtrusive. Whenever she takes her walks abroad, she becomes almost mobbed by her admirers, and has had more than once to take refuge in a friendly passing carriage. Should she ride in the Row, a little cavalcade accompanies her, which only quits her presence when some very distinguished personage comes up and canters by her side. Her passage through the realms of society is like a royal progress, so marked are the homage and adulation she receives. Yet if in London her position is so prominent, it is as obscurity compared to the sway she exercises in the country. At castle, court, and hall, she is, no matter who may be the visitors, always the most favoured of guests. Her word is law, and her wishes command the amusement of the hour. If she votes guessing acrostics dull, acrostics are abandoned. If she wishes burlesque instead of

comedy to be acted, the little theatre is made busy with rehearsals for burlesque. Does she suggest joining the gentlemen who are out covert-shooting at the witching hour of luncheon, the afternoon calls or the drive to the neighbouring ruins are put off. Does she express a desire to meet certain people, those certain people are at once asked. Is she fond of hunting, the best and safest of mounts that the stables possess are placed at her disposal, whilst the most sober and careful of grooms is specially told off to attend upon her, and to see that her exquisite beauty should not for a moment be in danger. Balls, dinners, lawn-meets, and all the rest of social hospitalities and distractions, are given in her honour; and all her tastes and inclinations are so carefully studied by her

host and hostess, that when she takes her departure it is difficult to decide which feeling is uppermost in the breast of her entertainers—the sense of pride at having obtained a visit from the great beauty, or a sense of relief at having got rid of her. Still, crowned and enthroned as the professional beauty now is, it would not surprise me if soon a social revolution were to take place, and she be deposed and exiled to the obscurity from which she sprang. Beauty will always receive its due meed of homage and admiration; but there is no reason why we should go out of our senses about it, and exalt it to a position which tends to destroy all that is charming and attractive in woman. Honest respect is one thing, a silly idolatry is quite another.

TOM TURNER'S DUEL.

A Story of College Life.

CHAPTER I.

ST. BOODLE'S.

It's an old story now, for this shocking affair took place in the year 1840, when Tom Turner and I were freshmen together at St. Boodle's College, in the University of Oxbridge.

St. Boodle's is one of the small colleges in Oxbridge, but it had in our day, and has still, I believe, the reputation of being about the pleasantest and most comfortable place in which an undergraduate's lines could fall.

The 'men' in the college were a very nice set, but it must be confessed not 'a reading lot,' nor much addicted to having their names appear in conspicuous places in the class-lists, but taking their degrees, when they did take them, in a quiet, sometimes in an extremely deliberate, way. Once, indeed, I remember that a St. Boodle's man came out a double first; we were all as much delighted as amazed. This shows, we said, what St. Boodle's men can do when they like. But the strange thing was that none of us knew the man; we had never met him at a supper-party or a wine. It was said, and no doubt truly, that he lived in college, for all St. Boodle's men did, and certainly his name was in the calendar. And when he took his place at the high table we all admitted that his features were somehow familiar to us, and that we must have seen him in chapel or in hall. No question but that he really was a St. Boodle's man.

And when Dick Slasher offered a hundred to one on it, he could find no one to take even such long odds.

But if, as a rule, we did not distinguish ourselves in the examination halls, we did pretty well elsewhere; we had five 'Varsity blues' amongst us, three in the eleven and two in the eight. Our boat was high on the river, and in the hunting-field we flattered ourselves that we were unrivalled. And was not this something? As we won a steeplechase or bumped the stern out of the boat before us on the river, or bowled down one after another of our opponents' wickets, we used to hear on all sides, 'Well done, St. Boodle's! that's their style! St. Boodle's for ever! Hurrah!' And we felt and knew that this was glory.

We used often to discuss the relative merits of the two theories of education,—the general, and the St. Boodle's theories, as I may call them. 'Well,' Dick Slasher used to say, 'it seems to me an absurd thing to measure a man's usefulness in the world by his skill in dealing with your Greek or your cube roots, whatever they are; that's not what has made England what she is. If the Duke had looked into the Senate House when the little go was going on, he'd never have said, "That's where the Battle of Waterloo was won." Come, I'll lay ten to one it would have been "Go it, St. Boodle's" with him. Will any one take me? Of course no one took him. Even had there been any means of deciding the bet, we were all

quite of his opinion, and ready to give the odds, every one of us.

As for our 'dons,' they were a first-rate set, we all agreed, with no nonsense about them. So long as a St. Boodle's man did not do anything sufficiently singular to bring his college into undue notice, he was not interfered with, and any success in the orthodox St. Boodle's line was always heartily welcomed and applauded by the authorities. It was whispered, indeed, that our tutor, Dr. Turtle, was anxious to change the character of St. Boodle's, and make it more of a reading college; but this, I think, was a slander. He certainly took no definite step in such a direction; and the rumour took its rise, I imagine, from a certain gruff and severe air which the doctor put on to awe freshmen and keep them down, as it were, a little at first, so that they might not be quite unmanageable by their third year.

From what has been said it may easily be supposed that college life at St. Boodle's was about as easy-going and pleasant a sort of thing as can be imagined.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUELLING PISTOLS.

It was towards the end of the October — the freshman's — term that I went up one evening after hall to wine with Duke. Duke, let me say, was what may be called a model St. Boodle's man. He was reckoned the best horseman in the college, and therefore, as we believed, the best in the University. He was in the University Eleven moreover, was a capital bat, and acknowledged to be the best wicket-keeper in the team. He was, besides all this, as pleasant and jovial a fellow as you would find; full of fun, and in a word quite an

ornament, as we said, to his college. When I add that Duke was 'a third-year man,' it will be understood that he was held in much veneration by us freshmen.

Tom Turner and I went up together to Duke's rooms on the occasion I refer to. Capital rooms they were too, and so comfortably furnished. Quite a crowd of easy chairs, and the walls were decorated with, in addition to some good engravings, fencing - foils, rackets, boxing-gloves, whip-racks, pipe-racks, and other concomitants of a thorough college (St. Boodle's) training. When Turner and I entered, there were several men already seated round the fire crackling walnuts and sipping their port — Fairchild and Tredennick of St. Audit's, who had been dining in hall with Duke; the former of these being remarkably handsome, but very slight and delicate-looking, and, as I afterwards learned, a capital actor, always taking ladies' parts in the University theatrical society. There were, besides, Dick Slasher, and Jack Bulfinch, of our college.

As we joined the circle, they were examining a handsome pair of duelling pistols which were being handed round for inspection. Where did you get them? and why did you get them, and what are you going to do with them? were the questions being asked. 'Well, I got them at some old fellow's auction,' said Duke; 'there was a crowd about the door of the house; I went in to see what was up. The pistols were going for a song as I entered; I made a bid, and they were knocked down to me, and as to what I shall do with them I am sure I don't know. One thing you may take your oath I sha'n't do. If I am fool enough to buy what I don't want, I'm not quite such a fool as to go in for duelling.'

Upon this a discussion on the merits of duelling arose, in which, rather to our surprise, Turner stoutly advocated the practice. It was, he asserted, beneficial to society; it promoted a fine and courageous spirit; there were evils which the law could not reach, and cases in which a duel was the gentleman's only resource, and so on. Not that Tom Turner was really convinced of all this, but he thought it the right sort of thing to say.

Tom, you see, had the misfortune to be an only son; and his adoring parents had, up to this, kept him at home, where they made rather too much of him; and he was, in consequence, just the sort of fellow for whom a little 'taking down' would be wholesome. He appeared his first day at lecture, I remember, in such a dilapidated condition—his gown torn, and the board of his cap broken into little pieces, that he might not look like a freshman—that Dr. Turtle insisted on his getting a new cap and gown at once.

Now this sort of thing was not liked at St. Boodle's; it was pronounced 'bad form.'

'A man may do what he likes here, of course,' said Dick Slasher, 'but affectation be hanged.'

Still Turner was not a bad fellow. And had his education been perfect, why, there would have been nothing left for the University to do. And it is true, even at St. Boodle's, that one lives and learns.

'Come now, Turner,' said Jack Bulfinch, 'it's easy to talk in that sort of way, but a state of things in which you were not able to have a dinner-party without the chance of a duel after the dessert was, in my mind, about as bad as could be; wire fences are a trifle to it.'

'And all the good it did,' remarked Slasher, 'was to give your

professional scoundrel the power of bullying his betters.'

Turner could not see this. No one, he asserted, need fight unless there was a good cause; and he took leave, he said, to hold his own opinion on the subject.

'Well, old boy,' said Duke, 'with your way of thinking, it's more than likely that you will have an affair of honour before you pass the little go; and if you do, I'll lend you these tools, and be your second to boot.'

'All right! So you shall,' replied Turner; and the subject dropped.

CHAPTER III.

MISS TREDENNICK.

ABOUT a week after this Duke and Tredennick came to my rooms one morning.

'Come, like a good fellow,' said the latter, 'and dine with me this evening. Excuse a short invitation. I want to show my sister a little college life; how we unfortunate fellows do when we are torn from the bosom of our families; and I have asked a few fellows to dinner.'

'Have you seen his sister?' Duke whispered to me as he was leaving. 'Splendid creature! Turner's asked too; be sure you bring him with you.'

Accordingly, at six o'clock I found myself in Tredennick's rooms in St. Audit's. Turner was already there. Duke and Bulfinch entered almost with me.

'Well, we are all here now; dinner may come up,' said Tredennick. 'Let me introduce you to my sister.'

Then a young lady left the window, where she had been sitting, and came towards us.

'My sister—Mr. Bulfinch, Mr. Duke, Mr. Turner, Mr. Standish—all of St. Boodle's,' said Tredennick, as we made our bows.

I have a particularly good memory for faces, and the moment Miss Tredennick turned towards me hers struck me as familiar ; but I could not think where I had seen her. She was a very handsome girl ; a dark style of beauty, and not a bit like her brother. She was very tall and fine-looking, with dark hair and pale complexion and well-cut features. The mouth, indeed, was a little too large, but it gave the face a pleasant expression. She had slightly arched eyebrows, long dark eyelashes, and, to crown all, a pair of splendid dark eyes. She wore a black-velvet gown with long sleeves, and with a lace frill about the neck and wrists. The dress was most becoming, and Miss Tredennick looked in it, I don't say pretty, but stately, magnificent. She was not a person to forget. 'Where can I have seen her?' I asked myself.

'I wonder who will have the luck to take her in to dinner,' whispered Duke. 'Isn't she a stunner, Turner?'

Turner evidently thought so. He clearly was falling in love with her as fast as possible ; he could not take his eyes off her or listen to what any one else was saying.

It fell to no one's lot to take Miss Tredennick in to dinner.

Tredennick had been fortunate enough to get rooms which had been intended for a don, and so had two sitting-rooms ; in the inner of these—his study—dinner was laid. When it was announced, Tredennick said to his sister,

'Well, Lucy, as we cannot all take you in, and as it would be invidious to make any distinction, pray go first, and we shall follow.'

And so we went in to dinner and seated ourselves at the table, Turner contriving to secure for himself the seat beside the lady.

The dinner passed off most plea-

santly. Duke and Tredennick were both in great spirits, telling capital stories and making no end of jokes. Turner was also enjoying himself, and no wonder, for Miss Tredennick was evidently making herself very agreeable. They never ceased talking to one another all the time.

Dinner over, Miss Tredennick withdrew, and when the decanters had gone round a couple of times, our host proposed that we should follow her and have some music.

'My sister,' he said, 'is supposed to play and sing pretty fairly.'

There was a piano in the next room, and Miss Tredennick was easily persuaded to gratify us ; and certainly her brother had not spoken too highly of her powers. She had a quite unusual contralto voice, which, for a lady, was singularly strong and full in the lower notes, and she sang with much spirit and feeling. She played well, too, her touch being both firm and full of expression. For appearance, though, I should have preferred a smaller and less muscular hand. After a little while, Tredennick, rather to my disappointment, proposed that we should have a rubber of whist, to which Bulfinch and Duke at once agreed.

'Who will take the fourth hand? My sister does not play. Will you, Standish?' our host asked.

'Well,' I said, 'I have no objection ; but there's Turner, perhaps he would—'

'O, not at all !' exclaimed Tom eagerly. 'I had much rather look on, indeed I would. I am a wretched hand at whist.'

'O, don't let us have him,' whispered Duke to me, 'he'd be certain to revoke. Don't you see there's only one suit he's capable of thinking of now?'

'Perhaps Mr. Turner would like a little more music,' said Miss

Tredennick, with the sweetest smile.

'Of course he would,' said her brother; 'and as you are going to play, we shall go into the next room, so as not to be distracted by the ravishing sounds. Come along, Standish. Fill your glasses and make yourselves as comfortable as the circumstances will admit,' said our host, as we sat down at the whist table. 'My sister and Turner will amuse one another very well for a bit, and when he likes he can cut in.'

So we began our rubber.

The door between the rooms was left open, and we could hear the singing very well. Miss Tredennick was most obliging, and sang quite a number of songs, to which I confess I attended more than to our game, and so played very badly. I remember one song in particular; it was of a plaintive character, and the low notes of Miss Tredennick's voice sounded most touching and full of feeling. I just caught these words, almost whispered as they were:

'For me the summer's waning,
Rayless the depths above;
Dark all the days remaining:
He knows not that I love.'

Come, now, I thought to myself, you are not so old and the prospect is not quite so gloomy as all that; and if he does not know, it's not your fault. You see, I was feeling a little annoyed with Turner—too bad of him to have all the fun.

Then the singing ceased, and I was able to attend better to the game.

I thought, but who? and it had just struck me that if Fairchild, whom I met a few evenings before, had been six feet high, Miss Tredennick was the kind of girl one might have expected his sister to be, when suddenly our game was brought to a close.

A piercing shriek came from the next room. We started to our feet and looked at one another. Then there came another and another.

'Good heavens, what has happened?' exclaimed Tredennick.

Then we all rushed into the next room. There we saw Miss Tredennick fallen on the sofa with her face buried in her hands, and evidently in a hysterical condition. Turner was standing beside her trying to raise her up.

'What in heaven's name is this?' cried Tredennick. 'What has happened? What is the matter, Lucy? tell me!'

There was no answer.

'Lucy darling,' he asked again, 'can't you speak? What is wrong? O, tell me!'

Then, in a voice choked with sobs, we heard her say:

'Ask Mr. Turner; he can tell you.'

'What is it, sir?' said Tredennick, addressing our unfortunate friend. 'What is the meaning of this? What have you done? Tell me at once.'

'In a moment,' answered Turner.

'Just allow me to explain.'

'Let me at any rate be spared your explanation, sir,' said Miss Tredennick, rising from the sofa. 'Take me away, Fred;' and Tredennick led his sister into the room we had left, saying to Turner as he passed: 'You shall hear from me, sir, about this.' And the door was closed.

'Awkward business this,' said Bulfinch. 'What in the world, Turner, have you been doing?'

CHAPTER IV.

AN AWKWARD DILEMMA.

ALL this time I had been wondering if it was possible that I had seen Miss Tredennick before. I must have seen some one like her,

'I am sure I don't know,' he answered.

'Awkward indeed!' said Duke. 'You have evidently grossly insulted Miss Tredennick, however you did it. I would not have believed it of you, Turner, indeed I would not; it's too bad. Of course there must be no duelling or any nonsense of that kind. You will make an ample apology, Turner. You must say that you deeply regret what in a moment of infatuation you have done, and all that sort of thing. Tredennick is a first-rate fellow; and if the apology is such as a gentleman ought to offer in a case of the sort, I'll answer for it he will accept it.'

'Well, but just hear me,' said Turner. 'I did nothing, positively nothing. I'd be the last person in the world to insult Miss Tredennick. There has been some mistake.'

'What, did you not attempt to—ah, ahem—to kiss her?' said Duke.

'Most certainly not,' cried Turner. 'Nothing of the kind. I give you my honour as a gentleman.'

'O, then it's all right,' said Duke. 'I shall go and speak to Tredennick, as you say there has been some mistake, and a few words will explain all.'

Saying this he knocked at the door and went in. As we stood silent by the fireplace, some very strange but indistinct sounds came from the next room.

'What's that?' said Turner.

'O, that's the noise,' said Bulfinch, 'that Tredennick makes when he has lost control over himself. He must be in a frightful rage.'

In about five minutes Duke returned.

'I can't understand it at all,' he said. 'Miss Tredennick is deeply offended, and evidently thinks you have given her good cause to com-

plain of your behaviour, and her brother is furious, simply furious! Well, now, it's rather an awkward question to put to you, Turner, and you must quite understand that I don't wish to interfere in the matter; but the fact is that the lady says, or imagines, or—ah, well—that in fact you pressed her hand, or wrist, or something of the kind. Well, now, may I ask, is that the case?'

'Yes, it is,' said Turner. 'You see she asked me to feel her pulse.'

'Whew!' exclaimed Bulfinch, his eyebrows going up. 'That's odd, anyhow.'

'Well, but,' continued Duke, speaking with some hesitation, 'that's not all, you see. You really must excuse me, Turner; I'd like to have this matter settled satisfactorily, if possible. Might I venture to ask if—if, ah—pray pardon me, it's not curiosity on my part, I assure you—if, ah—in fact Miss Tredennick is right in supposing that you went so very far as to put your arm round her waist?'

'Well,' said Turner, rather confused, 'not exactly; that is to say—well, yes, in a kind of a way I did. Allow me to explain.'

'O, certainly,' said Duke.

'What I mean is,' he continued—'well, in fact she asked me to feel how her heart was beating.'

'By George!' said Bulfinch, and he thrust his hands into his pockets, and began to whistle softly.

Duke remained silent.

'I am afraid this is worse than I thought it,' he said, after a few minutes' consideration. 'I really never knew anything so awkward.'

Then he took a few turns up and down the room.

'One must do something,' he said at last, 'and I'll just go and try to explain the matter to Tredennick.'

He walked quickly towards the door, but then hesitated, advancing more slowly, and evidently in doubt. Before he reached it, however, he turned and came back to the fireplace, where we were standing.

'I say, Bulfinch,' he asked, 'could you go in and explain it, do you think?'

'Faith, I could not,' Jack replied. 'I don't understand it a bit.'

'O, come, like a good fellow, you might try,' he urged; but Bulfinch remained obstinate.

'Well, I'll make the attempt,' said Duke, 'as I suppose I must;' and he went again towards the door. This time his hand was on the handle; but he paused and again turned back, exclaiming, 'It's no go; upon my life, Turner, I can't do it. It's just the most awkward business I was ever in. You see,' he explained, 'I could of course say to Tredennick, Turner acknowledges that he did squeeze your sister's hand and put his arm round her waist; but he asserts that it was at her request he did it, to find how her heart was beating. That would sound rather odd, now, would it not? And Tredennick would be certain to ask, "Why, then, did my sister shriek and go into hysterics?" In fact he would not believe it. And between ourselves, old fellow, very few would.'

'Precious few, by Jove!' remarked Bulfinch emphatically.

'I hope you don't mean to doubt my word, Bulfinch!' exclaimed Turner, reddening.

'Come now, old man,' said Duke, 'don't lose your temper. One affair of this kind is enough at a time, in all conscience; but just let me finish what I was saying. Even if your account is true, as of course it is, and that Miss Tredennick asked you to squeeze her wrist and all the rest of it, you

see you can't well allege this by way of explanation. It would not be honourable, you know, or fair by the lady. It would never do to betray the—what shall I call it?—well, the very unusual—ahem!—I may say, extraordinary confidence she has reposed in you, and exculpate yourself at her expense. As it is, of course, what you have said will not go beyond ourselves; but you must quite see that her brother would be—and justly too—even more indignant at the explanation than at the original offence.'

At this moment Tredennick came to the door and called Bulfinch into the room. After a few moments the latter returned, and said,

'Tredennick is of opinion that if Mr. Turner has not some explanation to give, there is but one course open to him; and he has asked me to act as his second, which I have consented to do. He thinks, moreover—and I quite agree with him—that this affair should be kept strictly secret, as there is a lady in the case; and trusts, therefore, that Mr. Turner will choose one of the gentlemen present to act on his behalf.'

'This is most unfortunate,' said Turner. 'I can't apologise, for that would be in effect to say that I acted improperly, which would be untrue; and my explanation, as you have pointed out, would only make the matter worse.'

'Why, yes, you see,' said Duke, 'there are cases when a duel is a gentleman's only resource.'

'Yes, by George!' added Bulfinch, 'that's exactly what Tredennick is saying, that this is a wrong for which the law of the country provides no remedy, or only one, which consideration for his sister makes it impossible for him to obtain.'

'It's well, old fellow,' said Duke, 'that duelling is so much in your

line; for there is nothing else for it, I fear. I am to be your second, of course, I suppose? By Jove, when I bought the tools the other day I had no idea we should want them so soon!

CHAPTER V.

THE MEETING.

WE now left Tredennick's rooms and returned to St. Boodle's; it being deputed, of course, to Duke and Bulfinch to make arrangements for the meeting.

'If you and Standish will go up to my rooms, Turner,' Duke said, as we entered college, 'I will be with you in a few minutes, and tell you what we have decided on.'

We did so, and in about a quarter of an hour Duke came in rubbing his hands.

'Well, Turner, old fellow,' he said, 'it's all right; everything is settled most satisfactorily. Bulfinch thinks that the affair admits of no delay, if we are to keep it quiet. These things, you see, are certain to get abroad if you give them time; and then you would be subjected to a good deal of annoyance, and the meeting might even be prevented altogether. It's to be to-morrow, therefore. We three will have a quiet breakfast in my rooms at ten o'clock; for Standish, of course, comes with us, to act as umpire should any little difference arise. And afterwards we will walk out and meet Bulfinch and his man at the Willows at twelve. It's a quiet spot, about a mile out of town, where there will be no fear of interruption. The arrangements are capital, are they not, old man?' Duke added cheerfully.

'O yes, I suppose so,' said Turner, speaking with some hesitation.

'Do you know,' said Duke, 'I

disagreed with you the other evening about duelling; but this affair has quite changed my views, and I am glad the credit of St. Boodle's is in such safe hands. You will be quite a hero, Turner; and in your freshman's term, too; for of course this affair will leak out, do what we may to keep it quiet.'

The next day, about eleven o'clock, Turner, Duke, and I sauntered out of St. Boodle's gate, and took the way to the Willows. On reaching the ground we found that the other party had not yet arrived.

'Strange they are not here,' said Turner, with a short laugh. 'I hope they won't keep us long waiting.' And he took a cigar out of his case and lit it.

'He's as cool as a cucumber,' remarked Duke. 'Are you not, Turner?'

Turner did not reply, for just at that moment the sound of wheels was heard. The vehicle stopped in the lane adjoining, and Tredennick and his second appeared.

'O, they have come in the cab,' said Duke. 'It's all right; we arranged that a vehicle should be in attendance, and should bring a disguise for the survivor. It's well to be prepared for all contingencies.'

The pistols were now loaded, fourteen paces measured out, and the men placed. I was to give the signal.

'Now,' said Duke to Turner, placing him sideways, 'keep your head over your right shoulder, so; and your eye fixed on Tredennick.' Then, placing the pistol in his hand, 'Remember the hair-trigger. All you have to do is to raise your hand to the right height, and you are certain to hit.'

'O, no,' said Turner, 'I sha'n't. I mean to fire in the air. You see I have no quarrel with Tredennick; if he chooses to shoot

me, I can't help it. But I wish you, in case I fall, to remember that I fire in the air; and you will tell my friends so.'

'O, no, old fellow, you must not think of such a thing,' rejoined Duke. 'He calls you out, you see; it's the other side's doing, you know, not ours. And I'd wing him at any rate.'

There was no time for a reply. The signal was about to be given. A moment after both pistols went off together. When the smoke cleared off Turner was standing at his post, but Tredennick had fallen. A moment later Bulfinch was supporting him in his arms; but plainly it was all over with him. His hat, which he had worn low down over his brows, had fallen off; and even at some distance we could see the fatal mark in the very centre of his forehead.

As Turner walked slowly towards his opponent, Duke and Bulfinch ran to meet him.

'Come,' they said, 'this is a serious business, and there is not a moment to be lost. We must, at any rate, secure your escape.'

'I can't understand how it happened,' said Turner. 'You will bear me witness, Duke, that I fired in the air.'

'Faith, not I,' said Duke. 'Standish and I both saw it. And a cooler aim, or a prettier shot, was never seen.'

By this time we had reached the cab.

'Get in,' said Bulfinch. 'We brought a disguise; you must change as quickly as possible.'

A few moments after, Turner was arrayed in a complete suit of corduroy, with a carter's smock and hat, and a red shaggy wig. Then we all got in and drove towards town; but, strangely enough, I fancied as I stepped into the cab that sounds like those Bulfinch said Tredennick made when he

lost control of himself were coming from the field we had left.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DISCOVERY.

ON our way to St. Boodle's we learned that Duke and Bulfinch had foreseen and provided for every contingency.

'Our best course now,' said the latter, 'is this. We will get you into college. My uncle, old Turtle, has gone off on business for a week, and I have the run of his rooms. There is a kind of loft above his bedroom, that no one ever goes up to; you shall hide there while the search for you is going on. They will never think of looking in the tutor's rooms; and I, being on the staircase, can easily get you supplied with food. As to the rest, we must be guided by circumstances.'

At some distance from the college we got out. Duke and I walked first, and Bulfinch with Turner following a little after.

'Come, and I will just show you that hamper, carrier,' Bulfinch said to the latter, as they passed the porter.

And so we got Turner safely into Dr. Turtle's rooms, and showed him the lumber-room where he was to be hidden.

'You had better stay up there,' Bulfinch remarked, 'till the servants leave college at ten. I will bring you in some provisions to-night.' And we left him.

'Have some supper for two laid in my uncle's rooms the last thing before you leave college,' Bulfinch said to his 'scout,' whom we passed on the stairs.

'Or shall I say for three, Duke?' he asked as we reached the court. 'He will be as hungry as a horse by that, you know; and he will

want the remains for breakfast and lunch to-morrow.'

'Must not feed him too high, Jack,' Duke replied. 'He can't take much exercise up there, you see. Supper for two will do.'

That night after ten o'clock, when the college gates were closed and all was quiet, we went to see Turner. Supper was ready on the table, so we called him down from his hiding-place. And certainly he did justice to it.

'Have you heard anything? Has it been discovered yet?' he asked.

'Well, I believe the—ah—corpse has come into the college,' Duke replied.

'And am I suspected?' Turner asked. 'Are they looking for me?'

'O, they have not missed you yet,' said Bulfinch; 'but there will be the deuce of a search when they do, and we must just keep you quiet till it is over.'

'And what then?' asked Turner.

'Well, you see,' Duke replied, 'this is a very serious matter indeed, and we consider that the only safe course will be to get you out of the country. We think of having you conveyed by barge down the river—say packed in a chest or hamper, or something of that kind—and we shall arrange with some small coasting vessel to take you across to France until this unfortunate business is forgotten. But bye-bye, old fellow. It's not safe for us to stay too long here, it might attract notice. And be careful, should you hear any one moving about through the day, not to be discovered; indeed it would be as well for you not to come down at all till after ten at night, unless you hear the signal from us. What do you think, Bulfinch?'

'O, I quite agree with you,' he replied.

And so, after seeing Turner

safely into his retreat, and making him take the remainder of the provisions with him, we said good-night, and left him.

The next day an unexpected event upset all Duke's and Bulfinch's carefully-arranged plans. It was late—about nine o'clock. There were several of us standing about the foot of Duke's staircase, to whose rooms we and some men from other colleges were going, as the Mutton-Chop Club was to meet there that night. Bulfinch had just left us for the purpose of ordering supper for two to be laid in Turtle's rooms, when, to my consternation, I saw a cab draw up at the college gate and the Doctor himself step out of it. He had returned several days sooner than was expected. I rushed after Bulfinch, and was just in time to prevent the supper being ordered.

'Well, here is a precious fix!' he said when he heard my news. 'Let us go and consult Duke at once.'

We did so, but could see no way out of our difficulty.

'It just comes to this,' said Duke, 'that Turner will either be starved or discovered—the former will perhaps be the most unpleasant for him, the latter for us. You don't think now that he could last to the end of term without food, do you?'

'I don't know whether he could or not, but I am very sure he won't,' said Bulfinch. 'To judge from the way he ate last night, I should say he was finding it rather hard to keep quiet this moment.'

'No chance of getting him any food to-night, I suppose?' said Duke.

'Don't see how it's possible,' said Bulfinch.

'H'm. What about the window?' said Duke, reflecting. 'Might not something be done with a basket and string?'

'Could not possibly till the Doc-

tor is asleep, and risky business then,' said Bulfinch.

'Well, we must try it,' answered Duke. 'And to-morrow we will watch old Turtle out of his rooms to lecture or chapel or somewhere, and you shall send the scout and bed-maker on some errand, and we will get Turner into cover somewhere else.'

And so the matter was settled, and we went to supper.

Meanwhile Turner had remained perfectly quiet, as he was advised, in his garret. He had heard voices and people moving in the rooms below. At length all was still, and he heard the outer door shut. Then the old college clock slowly struck the hour of ten. And slowly and stealthily Tom Turner descended from his hiding-place.

The candles were lighted in the Doctor's sitting-room; the cloth was laid, and a hot supper was there all right, the covers on. Anxiety of mind, any mental exercise in fact, makes a man hungry, just as bodily exercise does. And Turner's appetite was ravenous. There was a basin of excellent soup—he quickly finished that; a pair of whittings also were disposed of; then, neglecting some trifling *entrées* as unworthy of notice, he went to work upon the *pièce de résistance* of the repast—a pair of boiled fowls. He was busy with them, taking occasionally a glass of Madeira or a long draught from the tankard of ale, when he was startled by hearing some one exclaim,

'Bless me, who is this? William, come here at once,' the speaker added.

It was not necessary for Turner to look up. At the first sound of the voice he knew that Dr. Turtle was in the room.

CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

'WHAT are you, and how did you come here?' the Doctor asked in a stern voice.

Poor Turner's mouth was full, and he could not well answer; so he took another pull at the ale.

'Lord, who be that, sir!' exclaimed the scout, who had stopped aghast at the door. 'Blessed if he hain't eat nigh the whole of your dinner too. Why, that's the carter porter said as how Mr. Bulfinch brought into college yesterday, and none of 'em saw go out.'

'Man, who are you?' demanded the Doctor again, getting more astonished and indignant as he saw Turner drinking his ale in place of answering his question.

As soon as Turner could speak, however, he stood up and said, forgetting altogether his wig and unusual style of dress,

'I think it's pretty plain, Dr. Turtle, who I am; and if you will allow me I will explain how I come to be here.'

'And allow me to say,' interrupted the Doctor, 'that it's very far from plain to me who you are, and I insist on knowing your name at once.'

'Why, I am Turner of St. Boodle's, of course.'

'O, you are Turner, our freshman. Upon my word, sir, you have contrived to make yourself as unlike a University man—I was going to say a gentleman—as anything I ever saw. Well, and why are you here, Mr. Turner, and in that dress? And why have you eaten my dinner?'

'I will explain all to you in private if you will allow me,' Turner answered.

'William, go and see if you can get me something to eat,' said the Doctor. 'And now, Mr. Turner, let me hear your explanation. Is

this some bet, or practical joke, or what is it ?

'O sir,' said Turner, 'it's far worse than that. I have fought a duel, sir ; and, quite contrary to my intentions, I have killed my opponent.'

'Killed your opponent !' cried the Doctor astonished.

'Yes, sir ; I meant to fire in the air, but I shot him through the head.'

'And who was it ?' asked the doctor.

'Tredennick of St. Audit's.'

'What ! Mr. Duke's friend ? Are you quite certain ?'

'Quite certain,' he answered.

'It is very strange, then,' said the Doctor, 'that Mr. Duke should have a supper-party in his rooms as he has to-night ; and I fancy I saw— O, there must be some mistake.'

'There can be no mistake about it,' said Turner. And he told the Doctor the whole story.

'I see,' he said, when he had heard it. 'And so you were in concealment in my room, and you thought that my dinner was intended for yourself. William,' he said to the scout, who then entered the room, 'just go to Mr. Duke's rooms and say that I wish to speak with him and Mr. Bulfinch for a few moments.'

When they appeared, Dr. Turtle said :

'I have just learned from Mr. Turner that he has killed Mr. Tredennick in a duel. Don't you think, Mr. Duke, it's rather unfeeling on your part to have a supper-party the day after your friend has been shot ?'

'Well—but, Dr. Turtle,' answered Duke with hesitation, 'this repast may be considered perhaps as having about it something of the nature of an Irish wake, if you know what that is.'

'O, indeed,' replied the Doctor.

'Unless my eyes deceived me as I crossed the court, it's rather the Egyptian custom you are following, and the corpse is present at the feast.'

'Ha, ha, ha ! By Jove, so it is !' exclaimed Bulfinch, who gave way to a fit of irrepressible and most unfeeling laughter.

'Come now, gentlemen,' said Dr. Turtle, 'this has gone quite far enough. I shall expect you, Mr. Bulfinch, and Mr. Duke to apologise to Mr. Turner, for I think you have given him good grounds for displeasure ; and, Mr. Turner, I must have your promise that while your name remains on the books of this college you will fight no more duels ; we have always been very friendly and harmonious here, and we really could not allow St. Boodle's to be made conspicuous in such a way.'

The three did of course as Dr. Turtle required ; and Turner, greatly relieved at learning that he had not shot Tredennick through the head, and that the whole thing was a practical joke, did not find it hard to forgive the perpetrators of it.

'There is no use in doing things by halves, old fellow,' said Duke to him as they left the tutor's rooms. 'You are not too angry, I hope, to come up and have some supper with us ; and you must be hungry still, I fancy, though you did have a pretty fair innings at old Turtle's dinner.'

'All right,' said Turner.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, having got rid of his disguise, he joined us at Duke's. Our host, pointing to a chair between himself and Fairchild, said,

'There's a place for you, Turner. I know you like to sit beside Miss Tredennick.'

Supper finished, Duke rose, saying, 'Fill your glasses, gentlemen. I shall on this occasion, with your permission, trans-

gress the rules of the Mutton-Chop Club, and propose a toast. I, with some others, have played off a practical joke upon a gentleman who is present—Mr. Turner. I must confess that we have been somewhat to blame; but let me say that throughout Turner has, in my opinion, acted admirably. If he was taken in, let me humbly say that was our merit, not his fault; though a joke with us, it was quite earnest with him, and he has behaved from first to last with pluck and good feeling; and best of all, gentlemen, he has at once and handsomely accepted our apologies. Mr. Turner's health, gentlemen. "For he's a jolly good fellow," &c.'

Turner, who really was a good fellow, and sensible at bottom, made a capital speech in returning thanks.

'I cannot,' he said, 'let Mr. Duke take all the blame upon himself. I talked like a fool the other evening about duelling, and I feel

that I have myself given occasion for what has happened; gentlemen, I knew nothing about the matter then, that's my only excuse. I have since found out what it is like to feel that you have deprived a fellow-creature of his life; and if, gentlemen, there are evils which the law cannot redress, better put up with them, I say now, than take a remedy that is worse than the disease. I have had a pretty sharp lesson, but I deserved it, and let me again assure Duke and his friends that I retain no angry feeling towards them in consequence.'

Turner spoke very quietly, and evidently meant what he said, and his speech was enthusiastically received, and from that day until the end of an unusually prolonged college career, when to every one's surprise he took his bachelor's degree (in music, it must be confessed), Tom Turner was one of the most popular fellows both with dons and men in St. Boodle's.

ON THE STRAWS THAT TURN US.

I PROPOSE to say a few words on the subject of straws. Literally, the term may have some slight suggestiveness, but the suggestions vary. To the bucolic mind it means fodder for cattle; ladies think of the straw hats, the delicate fabrics of Luton and Dunstable; while to men it has an agreeable association as a simple, but most effective, mode of suction, whereby pleasant and cooling liquids are conveyed from the icy crystal into the thirsty larynx. The straws of which I speak are metaphysical rather than physical. The word metaphysics simply arose because Aristotle wrote a treatise which came directly after his *Physics* and was therefore entitled *Meta-physics*. It is a convenient word, however, to denote something which 'no fellow can be expected to understand.' There are a number of straws floating about which are in reality vital powers, and possess no inconsiderable influence over the human race. The poet says:

- 'An earthquake may be bid to spare
The man who's strangled by a hair';

and sometimes a man may be more moved by a straw than he is by an earthquake. Therefore the social philosopher will not be indifferent to these social straws. The law of the land, indeed, professes not to care about straws—*De minimis non curat lex*; but he has not lived very long or very observantly in the world who has not found out that in a great many social matters the law is an ass. Justice may well be represented with scales upon her eyes.

As Archbishop Thomson explains the allegory, she has gone weeping blind.

Of course, in a properly balanced state of the human mind, it could not be in the power of mere straws to turn us, like so many weathercocks. But the most properly regulated mind is not evenly balanced at all times. There is a high-water mark and a low-water mark for most of us. I suppose this is what Mr. Matthew Arnold alludes to in his wise lines:

'And tasks in hours of insight willed,
In hours of gloom may be fulfilled.'

Who does not know a certain sickly, unfixed, irresolute state, when the vital forces are at the very lowest ebb? It happens most frequently, perhaps, in that hour preceding daylight in which most people die. At such a time a straw will turn us. It is a time of physical debility, which reacts upon the mental state. Unless you have a foregone conclusion to which you strongly cling, a straw will turn you. You had made up your mind for a climb, to see a mountain sunrise; and the straw of a suggestion occurs that to see a sunset would be equally fine and much more comfortable. You had made up your mind to do a stiff bit of work; but again that straw of suggestion whispers that you had better sleep upon it. It is only when you have so firmly grasped your suggestion that you act upon it with mechanical force and precision, that you are able to overcome that suffocating straw.

I was very much amused with what I saw of the action of men-

tal straws last night. Just as people may amuse themselves with watching straws in an eddy, so I watched straws floating about in the minds of sundry acquaintances. I was more or less amused because there was, in my own case, a straw flung backwards and forwards 'in what I am pleased to call my mind.' I had been for many days by that most delicious Italian lake, the Lago di Lugano. We had been staying many days. We ate figs and peaches, and reclined on couches in darkened rooms, and partook of harmless iced drinks, and bathed in the lake in the afternoon, and floated upon it in moonlight; and in the corridors and grove and gardens of the Hôtel du Parc we were well content to accept things as they went. But we were all well aware that things could not go on in this way for ever. But no one exactly knew when he would go; and except one or two, nobody seemed exactly aware where he was going to. Each man was at the mercy of an emerging straw. It was great fun to watch how the straws emerged. One man thought he would start very early next morning, because the morning hours were cool. Then another thought that he would avoid hurry if he went leisurely through the morning and started after lunch. Then Jones, a popular man, was going on to Venice; and Smith, who liked Jones, thought that he might as well go to Venice too. I was undetermined about the lakes; but because the Queen had been at Baveno I thought, as a loyal subject, that I should like to see the Villa Clara. You will find, my friends, that such straws as these often determine our acts and movements. You are conscious that an act of volition has been accomplished; yet so slight has been the volition,

that you can hardly explain what has been the particular straw which has determined it. And yet these turnings of straws may be real turning-points in life. You cross over the street at a certain point, the straw is that the road then happens to be free for half a minute; and on the other side of the street you greet a friend whom you have not seen for a dozen years, and that friend has something to tell you which you have longed to know for years. You hesitated for some time whether you would accept that invitation to picnic or dance, Master Henry, or stop at the club; but you decided on the party, and you sealed your fate. A man was going to Australia by the London; but the friend who was with him took it into his head that the ship looked like a long coffin, and this straw of a fancy determined him not to go, and so saved his life. Such is very much the ordinary state of things. The noiseless Fates steal by us shod with their velvety shoon, and we are sometimes wrecked upon trifles; just as the story goes that people may be done to death by the tickling of straws on the soles of the feet.

I look upon a straw with feelings of the deepest veneration. When I hear a person say, 'I don't care a straw about *him*, or about *her*,' it seems to me that perhaps the quoted straw may indicate a great deal of care and anxious thought. For consider what may be the results and uses of a veriest straw. A steed may have stumbled at a straw, and have caused the fall or the death of its rider. The children of Israel went out of Egypt on that question of having straw to mix with their bricks. When Galileo lay in his dungeon, the inquisitors charged him with atheism. He

is said to have taken up a straw, and to have told them that from that straw he could vindicate the existence of Deity. It is not too much to say that the argument of design may be wrapped up in a straw. It was, perhaps, through notches in a straw that some of the elemental musical ideas took their rise. We remember Mrs. Browning's great god Pan singing through his reed. It is impossible for a right-thinking man to speak irreverently of a straw. Such a man is just the kind of person, as Sydney Smith wittily said, to speak disrespectfully of the Equator. We can never properly decide what is great or what is little. Often enough what we call little is really greater than what we call great. It may be the mere turning of a straw, to use our phrase, that leads to the discovery of some physical facts of the highest importance. I am reminded of that fine saying of St. Augustine's, *Deus magnus in magnis, maximus in minimis*. We are told that it is not 'in man that walketh to direct his steps.' No, a straw may intervene and alter the direction of his path. And then there are those saddest of all straws, the straws which drowning men proverbially catch at.

There is a curious tendency in the human mind to decide the most important points hastily, and to reserve unimportant matters for mature deliberation. A man will often propose to a woman in a moment of excitement, and purchase a horse after prolonged inspection and inquiry. Those who thus marry in haste may spend a long life in leisurely repenting. It is as well for the happiness of the human family that this kind of thing does not invariably happen. Still there is many a matter, both im-

portant and unimportant, on which the pros and cons seem exactly balanced, and something like a ratio of equality seems established. It is in such even matters as these that we encounter the straws that turn us. We are poised in a wavering position, and the slightest impulse determines our direction. A man becomes a sort of logan stone, which may easily topple over. There are all sorts of stories respecting the way in which men have settled the most important matters by a hair's line of difference. The thoughtless many may settle a matter by the simple process of tossing up. Those who think, or at least think that they think, will allow themselves to be guided by the turning of a straw. Take that matter of marriage of which I spoke just now. The lamented Whyte-Melville, in one of his capital stories, makes one of his men ask one of his ladies whether she could sew on buttons. In the opinion of very many sensible people, to sew on buttons is the great mission of women in this life. It was the uncouth fellow's allegorical way of asking her to marry him. She really liked him very much; but being a literal person she replied literally that she did not in the least care for the sewing on of buttons. So that particular straw settled conclusively that particular question. Then I knew a man who was very much *épris* with an arch pretty girl. But her girlish wit somewhat lacked discretion. She made much fun of 'his sisters, his cousins, and his aunts.' He did not like to introduce what might be an antagonistic element into the family, and that little conversational straw settled the matter. In the same way, a girl was almost engaged to a very horsey man, whose legs showed a tendency to curvature on account of his constant

riding. Amans found a sketch made by Amanda, in which this little weakness was only too faithfully preserved. The result was an eternal separation. Similarly, I have known cases of a broken engagement, simply in consequence of a broken appointment. A man has missed a train, or could not find a cab, and has endured the consequences of perjury and reprobation. It used to be a hack device of some novelist to state or invent such an incident as bringing the hero home soon after the heroine had married the wrong man under an utter misconception. He generally came three minutes and a half after the priest had fastened the knot. There are many variations of that legend of Auld Robin Gray. That straw of unpunctuality has given an awkward turn to very many people. The other day I heard of a man who had fixed his mind steadily on the purchase of a certain house and grounds. He missed his train by two minutes. When he came to town, the sale was over by about two minutes. A friend had just become the purchaser. He explained the circumstances to his friend, and hoped that he would transfer the transaction to him, and he would be happy to pay a fine of fifty pounds. But the friend knew the point of advantage, and meant to keep it. He knew that his friend would practically be obliged to buy, and he calmly demanded one thousand pounds for his bargain. There was no alternative, for his wife had set her heart upon the place, and that costly straw of unpunctuality stood at a thousand pounds to him. But this sort of momentous straws are always flying about. A straw shows how the wind blows. A man who possesses that most important piece of information, how the

wind blows, may often make a very good thing out of that bit of knowledge. It has been said of some great statesman and some great warriors, that they prospered or not in policy and war just as they were free from the gout, or had been seized by a vindictive twinge of it. One or two of the greatest events that have happened in the history of the world have been determined by this matter of the gout. And the attack or non-attack of the gout may have been determined by the simple fact that the great man may have partaken of some fruit that was unwholesome, or some wine that was subacid. It is a matter of some surprise and humiliation that many great events of national and individual history are settled, not by council, not by deliberation, not by adroit calculation, but by the turning of straws.

Constantly in books and in society we recognise the turning up of that mystical straw. The other day I took up a Mr. Grunden's *Recollections of the Past*. It seems that he went out at a few days' notice to Australia. He did it rather as a lark. There was something to be done in the way of engineering. But Mr. Grunden does not seem ever to have come home again. The other day I was talking to the chaplain of an English colony established in a continental watering-place. He had crossed the Channel on a careless summer holiday, and had come to this romantic forest spa. He thought he should stay there ten days. As a matter of fact he had lived there for ten years. He had not been over to England for years. All his friendships and all his ties were no longer in England, but upon the Continent.

But there is one particular straw of a somewhat tragic and unhappy

kind which I must next take up. This is that Last Straw which breaks the camel's back. I have always had a great deal of sympathy for that most unfortunate and ill-used camel. Many a time and oft he had borne that most grievous burden of the piled-up heaps of straw. He had borne to the last point of endurance. Then they laid on a single straw more. The unhappy camel, after all his journeys over the hot desert, broke down most completely at that single but most final straw. The last moment concludes the cycle of the day. The last drop makes the cup overflow. The last straw breaks the camel's back. Which things are an allegory. Now let me point out one or two ways in which the last straw may be seen to break the camel's back. My first illustration shall be one of a most alarming character. It is an illustration drawn from the annals of secret poisoning. I am almost reluctant to mention these facts; but, in the first place, they are notorious; in the next place, modern science can baffle, or at least take its revenge on, the murderer; and, in the third place, it is possible that my words may convey a useful warning. My illustration is drawn from the use of the hydrate of chloral. I am glad to see that there has been a medical committee which has lately reported in warning terms respecting the use of this drug, which ten years ago set all the profession wild, and was supposed to be a therapeutic in every case. I will state the matter this way, not with accuracy, but with an approximation thereto. It is the nature of some poisons that the human system becomes tolerant of them. The more you take, the more you may take. This is the case with opium, and even with arsenic. There is an Austrian mine in which the

people accustom themselves to take quite big lumps of arsenic. It is quite the converse case in the matter of chloral hydrate. We will say that the human system can tolerate only a hundred and fifty grains, if, indeed, so much. But chloral hydrate is a substance which is very slowly eliminated from the system. It accumulates, and after a certain point the accumulation is fatal. Thus, suppose a man takes a dose of thirty grains. At the end of the first twenty-four hours he has not disengaged the entire dose. We will say that ten grains remain in the system; consequently, if he takes another similar dose, he has now really got forty grains instead of the thirty. In this way matters progress on a *crescendo* scale. It is obvious that a point is reached in which the body contains as much of the medicine as it can possibly bear. Now just go a point beyond this. Take another dose when the complement of possible doses is complete. It is the last straw on the camel's back. The camel breaks down. Of course this is only a rough illustration from the lay point of view, for doses and systems differ all round, but still it is an instance of that fatal last straw.

We might take further illustrations of the last straw. What is that 'drop too much' but just the straw too much? If the human camel is exceedingly thirsty, and cannot, like the camel, arrange to carry a cool cellar with him, there is a fatal possibility of his breaking down in the long-run. Nature is exceedingly tolerant, but only up to a certain point. She will stand any reasonable load, but she objects violently to that extra straw. Nature is a most pitiless, accurate, almost mathematical state of things. She keeps an unfailing register against all our little mis-

takes ; in the long-run, she adds them all up and presents her little total. If we impose on her that supererogatory straw, she is apt to demand a quick balance and to close the account. We speak of 'Madre Natura ;' but she is quite capable of being a stepmother as well as a mother. If we run our heads against those laws of hers, we receive bumps which may well puzzle all the phrenologists. 'Natur', said Mr. Squeers, with greater truth than that philosopher himself divined, 'Natur' is a rum un. O, what a blessed thing it is to be in a state of natur' !' His view is at least sounder than Rousseau's.

Let me pursue the medical illustration just a little further. Medical men sometimes say that acute diseases are chronic. By which they mean that the acute form is only the outcome of a long train of antecedents. You have disobeyed the first law of all medical science, which is *to keep well*. Symptoms have been neglected ; they have accumulated, have been intensified, have come to a crisis. It is a state of things which often occurs both morally and physically. Then comes the inevitable break-up. I met a man some time ago who used to travel in business, and almost passed his life upon the rail. He came home one evening, and walking across his dining-room he staggered like a drunken man. Uncharitable people, who did not know his habits, might have thought him intoxicated. He sank on his chair, and he was a prisoner in his chair all the rest of his life. He was completely paralysed in his lower limbs. The incessant travelling on the rail had at last proved too much for his nervous system. Hence the collapse ; and I have a strong impression that other collapses might be traced to a similar source. I knew of a lawyer

who was in a great rush of business. He liked his fees ; but like all men who succeed, he liked business thoroughly for its own sake. He was unable to refuse business ; and, indeed, to refuse business is the hardest trial which can happen to any professional man. His mistake was, that he did not provide himself with adequate assistance. The ill-treated brain took to softening, and then all business came to an end. I knew of a man who was enormously wealthy. In addition to the constant employment which his own vast property gave him, he was trustee for ever so many widows, orphans, and charities. He worked hard at accounts till the small hours in the morning. A boy-clerk, at fifteen shillings a week, might have done it all for him. But he preferred 'doing his own work himself,' and accordingly he had to quit this inferior existence where such a condition of things is not always possible. One of the best-known men in the country once told me that he was going to take a six weeks' holiday at the seaside. I was rejoiced to hear it. No man better deserved or more required such a holiday. Then he told me that he was going to take his new book with him to the seaside, and hoped to have it ready for publication by the time his holiday was over. I expostulated with him. I explained that he was only exchanging one kind of hard work for a still harder kind of hard work. But he took the advice of what is often a man's worst counsellor, himself. His book was successful ; but he never knew of the success. In each case it was the same—the last straw, the last straw, the last straw ! Nature speaks to us in a gentle whisper and subdued hint ; but if we will not listen,

she utters her edict with a voice of thunder, and perhaps strikes the offender down with her thunderbolt.

My readers will hardly fancy where I am writing these present lines. I am on a little plateau overhanging the falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen. Just below me there is a sort of opera-box projecting over the raving abyss of water. The sun has been gleaming on the vine-clad banks and the dark-green river; but when you come into these galleries you put on your overcoat and put up your umbrella as if you were going into a stormy night. I do not at all mind that splash of cold water which Father Rhine has thrown into my face, paying me the personal attention of leaving his card. How lovely is that cloud of tinted spray above the resounding rocks! And against the opposite bank there is evermore a veil of thinnest gauze, one of Nature's brideveils, woven of air and spray. Southey's lines on a waterfall, hardly applicable to Lodore—although I know and have climbed Lodore, and wish to speak of it with respect—find here their fullest realisation. But this thought occurred to me, as I leaned on the frail barrier which separated me from the seething caldron of waters, and which I could in a moment surmount—that it is

only the nature of a straw which so often makes the barrier between life and death. Many people are often looking out with agonised alarm at that last straw which is to come and break them up. They are living at an extreme state of tension, and they know that it cannot last. But it is just at this point that the incomparable value of the Christian revelation comes in. That revelation tells us that we shall never be tried beyond what we are able to bear. It tells us that with the danger and the burden there shall be a way of escape that we may be able to bear it. It plants against the span of the mighty waters, the rainbow of unalterable and immortal hope. We are told, in the picturesque Hebrew phrase, that the floods of great waters shall not come nigh us. Our feet are planted in safety upon a rock. Our instinctive horror of death and annihilation, despite pessimism, receive the fullest sympathy and answer:

‘Tis life of which our nerves are scant—
Life and more life is what I want,’

says our great modern poet. And there is One who, knowing exactly the structure of the human soul, has met this yearning: ‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’

F. A.

SHOOTING WILD-BOARS BY MOONLIGHT IN ALSACE.

I HAVE rarely been 'mixed up' with anything more entertaining. Several wild-boars had, the previous night, devastated part of a wheat-field near the border of the wood; and as the 'black beasts' who had done the mischief had not then been disturbed, there was every likelihood that they would come again to complete the damage. We, accordingly, were preparing ourselves for a night expedition against the marauders.

'By the way,' said my host, 'you know that night-shooting is forbidden here?'

'No, I did not know that,' I replied with some dismay.

'Well,' he said, 'if we were caught at it by the gendarmes or by the garde champêtre or forestier, why, we should be severely fined, and our guns would be confiscated.'

'Really!' I exclaimed ruefully. Then a happy thought struck me. 'Could not you get the officials out of the way, somehow?' I asked.

'Not very well,' he rejoined, laughing. 'The garde champêtre is all right, though. The farmer and myself have "squared" him. He has gone to see his great aunt, who is ill somewhere ten miles from here.' This with a wink.

At this piece of news I expressed a very lively satisfaction; for of course this communal guard was the party to be most likely to find us out, as he might have been out just that evening and heard our shots.

'As for the gendarmes,' pursued my worthy friend, 'we must take our chance of them; but I

don't think we should have much to fear from that quarter. They may, or may not, go for a round to-night; but the odds are great that they should not just come to that quarter of all others. They would of course do so if they had received a hint from any informer; but nobody knows what is going to take place, except the farmer, Fritz, and our two selves. Now, it is the farmer's interest that we should rid him of the *sangliers*; in fact, he came himself to tell me about them, and ask me to come round this evening; so he is not likely to tell, especially as he will join us in the fun. As for Fritz, he knows better than to go "blabbing" about, and provided we don't ourselves mention the matter, I don't see how it is to be known at headquarters at any time.'

'Neither do I,' said I, much relieved.

'Nevertheless,' pursued my companion, 'we must be prepared for anything. Should any one turn up after our shots (if we are lucky enough to have to fire), remain quite still until whoever is about has gone his way. That is the safest plan, because even if it were only a peasant going in the early morning about his work, he would be sure to tell whatever he knew of the affair as a matter of course.'

'All right,' I said, 'I shall remain still until you come to me if we are separated.'

'That we shall be,' he explained; 'for there is no knowing which way the boars will come. Therefore the four of us (for Fritz is

coming too; he is an excellent shot at all times) will have to watch at different spots around the field.'

'And you are sure the boars will come?' queried I.

'O, certainly, if no one interferes with them on their way. When once they have come to a crop and find that no disturbance occurs there, they always come to it again, until pretty nearly the whole crop is gone.'

'Very pleasant this for the farmers,' I interposed then.

'Very,' he rejoined drily. 'That is why my old friend came to tell me so quickly about it. Of course if we shoot any of the "beasts" he will have his share of the meat. That will be some compensation for his losses.'

Just then Fritz turned up with some fresh bullets he had been casting for his old smooth-bore carbine. He wrapped up each bullet in a piece of calico until it had to be forced down somewhat to enter the barrel of his gun, and when he had prepared three or four of these missiles, he declared himself satisfied.

'Not that I shall be likely to want *three* bullets to-night,' he explained to me. 'When once a shot has been fired the boars make themselves scarce without delay, but I might want another shot or two in the morning.'

At ten o'clock we drove away, and half an hour's drive brought us to the farmhouse, where we found a glorious supper awaiting us.

At about half-past eleven P.M., Fritz, who had been out loitering about, came in to say that the moon was shining brilliantly.

'I think,' added he, 'that we ought to start, sir; the boars cannot be long coming now.'

We instantly prepared ourselves; Fritz loaded carefully his

muzzle-loading implement, and we made a start. We had agreed that not a shot should be fired by either of us, unless we were pretty sure of bringing a 'beast' down.

'You understand,' explained my friend to me. 'Don't try any long shot, or random shot. It would only spoil the fun. If you get a boar within twenty yards, well and good, fire away. If they keep further away, keep quite still, for they are wonderfully suspicious—at the slightest noise they are off like cannon-balls, literally frantic with terror, and our chance then would be irretrievably gone.'

'O, but,' I said, 'twenty yards is rather a short distance, is it not?'

'Not by moonlight,' he insisted. 'It is not easy, by any means, to place a bullet so as to stop a boar neatly when firing at night. And, as you know, if the boar is not killed on the spot, we are sure to lose him, since we cannot boldly follow in pursuit.'

'I see. All right,' I said; and as we turned round the farm wall silence was strictly enjoined. We walked on thus, across the orchard, through a pasture, along two or three turnip-fields, some clover, and finally, there, before us, stood the wheat-field, gently undulating, like a peaceful sea, under the night breeze. The moon was at its full, and not a cloud was in the sky, so that the light was so strong that I certainly could have read a newspaper on the spot. I could see for hundreds of yards around me, almost as well as in day-time. When we reached the field:

'Now, sir,' said the old farmer in a hushed voice to me, 'if you will walk on quietly until you come to the corner yonder, where the willow-treestands by the brook, you will find it a capital station, and well under the wind.'

'I think,' said my friend to

Fritz, 'that you had better stand there too. The farmer and I will take the other corner.'

We accordingly separated.

The willow-tree stood on a pretty high bank, and getting behind that fence, we sat on the grass, Fritz and I, and began to look about us.

The brook ran murmuring by our side, the leaves of the old tree rustled, some quails were calling in the distance, but beyond these faint notes all around us was peaceful and silent. The wheat-field, at the corner of which we stood, was a very large one, coming tongue-shaped in our direction; the distance along the side was fully two hundred and fifty yards, and at the opposite corner, by the brook, my friend and the old farmer, we presumed, were ensconced. Of course we could not talk, and did not attempt to do so, and there we sat for two mortal hours without daring so much as to wink. I began to feel very chilly, dull, and sleepy. We had not heard a single noise which we could attribute to the customers whose coming we were so hopefully awaiting; and I began to suspect that they would not come that night. However, I took a drink, and handed the flask silently to Fritz. This worthy, however, to my astonishment, did not take it. I looked at him then, and found him with his head stiffly inclined towards the wheat-field, and he was intently holding up his hand to me.

I listened, but could not hear anything. That, however, the keeper's practised ears had detected something unusual was soon made pretty evident, for whilst I was still wondering what he was listening at, a grunt, or rather half a dozen quick sharp grunts, broke the stillness of the night, and presently we heard the boars having a tussle and fighting among

themselves, but they were as yet invisible to us, they being right amidst the standing crop.

I, of course, placed the flask on the ground at once, and quietly picked up my double-barrel rifle. Fritz, on his right knee by my side, quite hidden, all but his head, by the bank, had silently cocked his carbine, and held it almost to his shoulder, ready for a shot at the shortest of notice.

Presently we heard, 'Grunt, grunt!' from a boar.

'Grunt, grunt!' replied another.

'Grunt, grunt, grunt, grunt!' said then two or three more.

Then there was silence. Evidently they were asking if everything was all right. After a minute or so, a noise arose in the crop, as if several men had been tearing the wheat by handfuls, and the unmistakable munching of the pigs began noisily.

Suddenly they stopped feeding, and one of the youngest of the lot (judging from his voice) shrieked out in a frightened tone, 'Grunt!'

'Grunt?' the others seemed to query in a breath, in great alarm; and, without waiting for an answer, helter-skelter, pell-mell, away rushed the whole lot, five of them, out of the wheat into the open.

They broke from the field at full speed about fifty yards from us. We had crouched behind the fence so as not to be seen by them, and away the 'beasts' tore, like mad beings, for about a hundred yards, when they slackened speed, and finally stopped, turning round at last to look back.

'Grunt, grunt, grunt!' remarked one of the biggest, as though to say, 'what is the row about?'

'Grunt, grunt, grunt, don't know, I am sure,' seemed to reply each of the others.

'Then grunt, grunt, what the

deuce did we run away for?' queried the lot in a chorus.

'Grunt, grunt; so-and-so gave the alarm,' suggested perhaps one of them.

Whilst all this consultation was going on, the boars stood facing the suspicious wheat-field, and with their heads high up in the air, they were audibly sniffing the breeze, and trying to scent the danger, if any. One or two of them seemed inclined to go altogether. Evidently their minds were not quite at rest on the point, and they feared all sorts of dangerous things, no doubt.

The leader, however, a bolder sort of 'beast,' perhaps being very hungry, did not see the fun of running away from a good meal without any more tangible proof that it was not safe to indulge in it than the mere vagaries of a timid companion; so, with a determined series of portentous grunts, he came back, step by step, slowly and carefully moving his head right and left, pretty much like a pointer, winding with great caution.

When he had gone about twenty yards from the others, the latter evidently thought they were awful cowards to remain behind, so they followed suit, and thus they all came back without order; but all carefully looking and smelling about, until they were within fifty yards of us, when they came to a full stop again.

At that manœuvre, under the shelter of the bank, I looked at Fritz, and pointed to my rifle barrels in mute pantomime, as though asking 'Shall I fire?'

Fritz seemed undecided. Of course it looked likely that the boars, somehow, would come no further. Although the breeze blew from them to us, yet who knew but that the scent of our persons might have tainted the air,

and they could, somehow, make it out, not quite distinctly, perhaps, but yet sufficiently so to prevent them from returning to their feed? They might go at any moment, I thought, therefore no time was to be lost on our part. True, the distance was a little more than that prescribed beforehand by my friend; but in spite of the deceptive glare of the moon, I could see the boars so plainly that I was certain I could hit one whilst they were standing still, at any rate. So after a second glance at Fritz, who evidently did not want to take the responsibility of the shots, seeing that he was still doubtfully shaking his head (of course he thought I could not kill outright a boar at fifty or sixty yards range under the circumstances) I made up my mind to demonstrate, not only the possibility, but the very likely probability of success. So without more ado, I quietly slipped the rifle barrels on the top of the bank between two thistle roots; I slowly brought up my eye on a level with the tubes, squinted along them at the biggest boar's shoulder, and crack! sped the bullet, so true that the boar collapsed there and then.

The effect of the shot on the others, however, was tremendous. Astounded beyond measure, they uttered a sharp cry of affright, lowered their heads, and dashed across the strip of wheat in front of them, fairly bewildered by the explosion. They were through the crop in a moment, and charged the little brook. Fritz fired at the last, and hit him so cleverly that the brute failed in his stride to clear the brook, and fell in it. He was, however, up again in a twinkling, and was climbing the opposite bank, when I ran up to him, deliberately fired at his neck near the shoulder-

blades, and he rolled again in the water, but quite dead that time.

The others were flying along at full speed, on the little path that ran by the brook, and at a glance I caught the prospective scene. Two shadows (my friend and the farmer) had run to the brook from their posts, and were awaiting there the passage of the three boars.

Crack! crack! bang! exploded my friend's rifle and the old farmer's fowling-piece, and I saw them both run to a dark body, still crawling on the path. A wounded boar. Another crack of the breech-loader, and silence again reigns supreme.

We then rejoin them, and find them slinging their boar by the heels. They had only shot that one, and no wonder, considering the speed the boars were going at when they passed them. I should have missed them clean, I know, under the circumstances.

'Did you kill one, too?' asked my host.

'We have killed two, sir,' said Fritz, and he related the whole affair.

'Ah, well, all is well that ends well,' said the farmer, who was, I may state, in the highest state of jubilation. 'Let us go back to the farm. If we are to get the boars removed before daybreak, there is no time to be lost.'

Neither was there, for a pale tint was already invading the heavens in the east, and ere long Master Phœbus with the golden locks would make his appearance over the horizon.

Of course my friend Fritz and I went to bed forthwith, and when we got up for breakfast, at about ten, we had a *hure de sanglier au vin blanc*, as *pièce de résistance*.

'It is quite fresh, I assure you,' said the farmer, with a broad grin, to me; 'allow me to help you to two or three slices. In fact, I believe you have seen this gentleman, face to face, before.'

At this we roared again. Ah me! what a jolly time that was, to be sure. To crown it all, as we were driving home about noon we fell in with two of the mounted gendarmes.

'Good-morning, gentlemen.'

'Good-morning,' replied my host, who knew them well; 'any news?'

'No; nothing of importance, sir. Someone told us that some poachers have been heard potting a wild boar last night. We shall have to look out for these gentry one of these fine evenings.'

'Ay, that you ought,' replied my friend, with the utmost composure, 'these *braconniers* have the very *diable* in their bodies, to go watching about all night, like that; have not they, now?'

'You are right, sir, quite right. But we will pounce on them yet.'

'Ah! Hope you will. Good-morning. Come round for a glass or two of wine by and by?'

'All right, sir, thank you, so we will, much obliged. Good-morning, gentlemen.'

And away we went.

As good as a play it was. I thought I should have had a fit. The worthy officers little guessed that the actual delinquents had *de facto* been before them.

This gave quite a zest to our adventure. Had they, however, looked into the body of the dog-cart, two *bêtes noires*, therein stretched side by side, would, methinks, have made them open their eyes.

WILDFOWLER.

REFLECTIONS AT BRIGHTON.

WHILE waiting listlessly for lunch
And noting some promiscuous figures—
A bishop, an itinerant Punch,
A four-in-hand, a troupe of niggers—
There rises from the noisy street
A spell to summon buried fancies.
Though hackneyed now, I thought it sweet,
When, to its strains with flying feet,
I sought a maiden's eyes, to meet
What cynics might have called sheep's glances.

That valse again! There was a time
I thought it only ours to know it;
I found its meaning quite sublime,
And felt not then ashamed to show it.
Again I stand on polished floor,
A verdant youth with heart of tinder,
Yet striving to find life a bore—
A vision glorifies the door—
A sub., but unattached no more,
I'm thine for ever, Lady Linda!

O strength of youthful faith! Nor schemes,
Nor threats, nor separation stopped it;
Bright bloomed our love, like summer dreams,
Six months—and then we somehow dropped it.
And, lo, that music speaks again,
With all its mastery of passion;
A first love still, and all in vain
We try to love a newer strain,
As if the soul of joy and pain
Could change with ever-changing fashion.

Ah me! it made my heart beat loud
And fast for nearly half a minute;
While not an hour ago I bowed
To Lady Linda in the crowd;
And with clear conscience I had vowed
My heart had no soft fibre in it.

But as once more that valse I hear,
Albeit from a barrel-organ,
A form in gauzy clouds is near;
Soft nothings charm a little ear,
And once again we own the fear
Of mother stern as any Gorgon.

But time has passed, and I have found
Life not at all as I designed it:
That 'neath the flowers is common ground,
That dancing is but turning round,
While catgut makes the heavenly sound,
And, Heavens, I don't mind it!

LONDON SOCIETY.

DECEMBER 1879.

PRINGLE'S MESS-STORY.

‘WHERE it happened,’ says Pringle of Ours, ‘was in a well-known port of a distant Eastern island: why it happened was because a not-over-wise judge chose to put his own construction on the law of arrest, in a civil procedure, as it affected a foreigner.

‘It won’t do to peach upon and mouth out the real name of the place, and I don’t care to saddle it with a fictitious one, but I’ll try and word-picture the locality, and leave you fellows to guess at its whereabouts and designation.

‘First and foremost, then, it is a hot, steamy hot, small, old-fashioned town of Dutch origin, situated on the sea-board, at the south-west corner of an island which, even when the Mynheers held possession, was worth no end of rix-dollars to their State; nowadays I can’t say how many tens of thousands of pounds its exports bring in yearly to our revenue.

‘Pretty it is to look upon, especially from the sea; green and luxuriant at all seasons; not a bit like rocky Gib., or white glaring Malta, or dried-up Aden, which, likely enough, you have touched at on your voyage out. When you get within the harbour—a ticklish manœuvre in navigation to do safely—you are hemmed

in on one side by a picturesque well-wooded hilly spur, on which many charming bungalows stand, and on the other by a rocky promontory where are built some fortifications, useless in these modern times. In front, close at hand, is a sweeping bay, its shores clothed with groves—*topes* is the local name—of cocoanut palms growing almost down to the water’s edge, and half hiding *nigger* huts and European houses nestling among them. A little away there lies the straggling native town and bazaars backed by belts of fruit and timber trees; and, in the far distance, a range of lofty mountains, overtopped by one of the highest peaks in the land, closes in the scene. So much for the still life of the place; now for its bustle and vitality.

‘Steamers of the P. and O. and other companies arriving daily, filling the narrow sandy streets with buxom, sparkling, rosy English maidens—such contrasts to their listless, delicate, “washed-out” resident sisterhood—with all sorts and conditions of men, too, who either gad about with their fair companions, or, taking their rest and their iced cups in the verandahs of the many hotels, allow themselves to fall into the

clutches of cute Moormen and other jewellers, arrant rogues, ready to swear by Mahomet or Buddha, as the faith may be, that gilt copper is virgin gold, and glass or paste veritable country-dug precious stones. Now and again a big man-of-war will look in and deluge the fort and *pettah* with its blue-jackets; and not unfrequently a French trooper, bound Cochin-Chinawards, comes for coal and provender; and then every nook and corner, every *boutique* and bazaar, rings with the voluble tongues of the soldiers of France, "vieilles moustaches," newly-fledged "piou-pious" (recruits), and piquant, but rarely pretty, *vivandières*.

'Besides these extraneous attractions, so to call them, the little outpost—for an outpost it is of the colony—has a small but pleasant muster within itself of English, Anglo-Dutch, and other European inhabitants—its multitudinous petticoat-garmented and otherwise feminine-looking aborigines go for nothing—and what with their society and a gun and line for sport, it is not, believe me, half such a bad place, as places in that habitat of coffee and spices count, to be, to do, and to suffer in.'

'I know right well where we are,' exclaims Charley Wise. 'Point de Ga—in Cey—'

'Shut up, youngster, shut up! you are too raw from the crammer's; never mind the name; listen to the story.'

'At the outbreak of the Crimean war I was on detachment at the place I have been trying to depict. Two companies of my regiment, the same number of Malay riflemen, twenty or thirty royal gunners, and a few gun Lascars—slaveys to the Artillery—composed the snug garrison of which Major Tim O'Leary had

the command. In piping times of peace, this worthy Irishman was an easy-going kind of a chief enough; but now that grim-visaged war had shown his wrinkled front, he turned to the strictest and most martinet of captains, stepping from that which, in the first instance, seemed to us the sublime to that which in the other instance we considered ridiculous; for it came across our minds that Nicholas had too much upon his hands just then in and about Sebastopol to bother himself with such an out-of-the-way insignificant fortress as ours. However, on this point O'Leary was at variance with his men—not an unusual occurrence when drills and field days are in question. He caused the old rusty cannon of the year one, mounted on the tumbling-top pieces batteries, to be scaled and furbished; he hunted up shot and shell; he indented for "gunpowther," and he paraded our lives out on a large grassy glacis too handy by half. "Be Jabus," said he, "if Gortchakoff or any odder Off. has a moinde to come this way, we'll be after taching him that we are not aslape and dhraming."

'Well, in the midst of all these precautions we were startled one morning by a report from the lighthouse that a man-of-war, showing no colours, was in the offing making for the port. Down we all rushed to the ramparts and other "coigns of vantage" overlooking the sea; there, sure enough, was a big ship, under full sail, steering dead for the harbour's mouth, and, before we could surmise who or what she was, or carry into effect one fourth of the tactics O'Leary had planned, there anchored right under our guns—not, fortunately for us, a foe of a Russ, but a friend of a Frank,

no other, indeed, than the crack French corvette *Le Falcon*, Captain Hippolyte Achille Hector de la Tasse de Sèvres.

'It is, or rather it used to be, the fashion to disparage the nautical abilities and proclivities of "Moosoo," but upon my word, so far as *Le Falcon* was concerned, no ship of any nation could have been better handled. Threading the narrows and hidden dangers of the channel of entrance, shaving the "Drunken Sailor"* by a fathom or two, in she flies, a cloud of canvas set low and aloft; and just as we are thinking where she is driving to, and that a few yards more and, smash, she'll go ashore—tap tap—we hear the beat of a drum—t-i-r-r-i-p—a long shrill whistle follows; men swarm up the rigging; splash goes an anchor; rattle, rattle, runs out a chain cable; bang, bang! belch out starboard and port guns, and before the smoke of a salute clears away there lies the corvette safe and snug, every inch of sail furled, her tricolour at her peak, her long pennant streaming, and looking as if, instead of five minutes, she had been five days at her moorings. It was really a pretty sight to see; and "Bravo Mounseer!" we exclaimed, while O'Leary, though he did not much affect our allies, having in his youth fought against them, heartily and honestly joined in the cheer.

'Once in, and it appeared as if *De la Tasse de Sèvres* had not the most remote intention of ever leaving us again. Day after day, week after week slipped by, and he and his remained; what for, except to cement *l'entente cordiale* in "grogs" and "bittère biere," to compliment our wives and to

flirt with our sisters, our cousins, and our aunts, never cropped up. The officers, delicately asked the why and wherefore, shrugged their shoulders and pleaded ignorance. "Le Capitaine l'ordonne," said one; "Pas mon affaire," said another; Jules Pilule, the doctor, was the only one who ever went beyond those three or four words of speech, and that to me, for the reason that he thought I favoured a love-suit of his with a sister of mine, and so was inclined to be confidential.

"Jules," I remarked one day, "what the dickens is keeping that craft of yours in these waters, 'grounding on her beef bones,' as English sailors have it? Is it for despatches by your consort-ship, as *La Tasse* tells us? Are you waiting to meet the Russians here, or are you funky, old man, to go out, lest one of Nicholas's big cruisers should pounce down and chaw you up? Ain't you sick and tired of the place, Pill?"

"Preengall," replies he, "to me it is zee zame, vedder vee ground on zee beef-bone or on zee bone of zee fowl, vee eat all zee days in zee curry. Zee place is agré-able, zee ladies sharming, zee op-per" (a common sort of rice-cake) "is sheap, and zee pay continue; vat more I vant, mon lieutenant? But, tenez, I vill visper someting in your air. *De la Tasse* 'as von affair considérable on ees 'ands. Ah, c'est un coquin, vat you call sly dogs, zat commandant mine. Tink you zat he waits letters from zee Consul General? Bosh! Believe you zat he attends zee coming here of *L'Alouette*, zee Lark? Hombogs! Zere is von lark of annodder plumage zat he 'atches in zee 'ouse of Smit, and before long times now, zee lark will be ready to floy, and—"

"Why, doctor," I interrupt him by saying, "surely you don't

* Pringle has made a hydrographical error. The Drunken Sailor rock is not where he places it (vide charts).—Charles Wise, Second Lieutenant *Dreadnoughts*.

mean to hint that your chief is 'spoons' upon one of the women-kind in Smith's bungalow, and that he is only biding an opportunity to be off with her?"

"Spoon! vat zou mean 'spoon'? O, I zee—in luve, éprise, enamelled—pah! enamoured—how I tells! Pardieu for zee me—truly I could nevair be zee 'spoon' viz Mam'selle Marie or vid Mam'selle Elise of Smit, zey are not of my goût—more! 'nemo potest Thetidem simul et Galatea amare'" (he gave the Latin its continental pronunciation, of course); "zou cannot at zee zame time luve zee Thatis and zee Galatea—it is enuf! No; but zee badinage to dismiss, zee captain is not on zee line of spoon, tout au contraire. He arrange vun leetle game; he settle zee ash of your Mistère Tom Jones; he propose to our Consul at Calcutta zat Jones he wear, nevair, zee uniform consular like zee Vunkerboshes and zee Zilvas, and zee everybody in zis leetle place; he advise zee post for Smit; and presently it vill be outs, and zere will be a jollie row between zee captain and zee Jones and Smit, or I am not Frenchmans, moi Jules Pilule qui parle. But vait and zee, vait and zee."

'Now to make you comprehend the drift of the talkative doctor's observations, I must let you know that we had living amongst, but not of, us the gentleman he has called Jones. He was a merchant on a small scale; that went for nothing, however, for bar one or two, all our merchants were of the Lilliputian type in business. But Jones, besides being Tom-Thumby, had been shady in his dealings (you will hear something more about this by and by), and we had tabooed him from general society. In his precious long stay in our port, La Tasse had picked up all the gup about

every one of us, men, women, and children; and when Jones applied for a vacant agency to represent France diplomatically and commercially, he put a stopper on the appointment by writing that the prestige and dignity of *la belle patrie* could, he thought, be placed in cleaner and more worthy hands. This was what Pilule had alluded to, and the "jollie row" he predicted was to come on, when Jones heard of the Captain's interference. It came, but not quite in the way expected.'

'One forenoon, the Major pays me a visit.

"Pringle," says he, "there's a foine hullabaloo up betwane the Frinch Captain and Jones."

"Not a bit more than I thought there would be," say I.

"Be the powers, there is more pluck in that spalpeen Jones than oi ixpected; me Oirish blud warums towards him. La Tasse has been wroiting or saying—"

"I know it, Major—"

"And just fancy, me buoy! Jones has chaalinged Mounseer to foight."

"Indeed!"

"But he won't mate him. Look here! Mac has sint me this. Oi can't make out La Tasse's jeuced bad fist, and even if oi could, oi can't spake his voile furren lingo. But you are larned in it, so rade."

'And he hands me a note, which so far as I can recollect, and make a literal translation of, went thus:

"To Mr.

Mister Jones,

I have received your cartel. I am Captain in the Imperial Navy of France. I have been six times—more—under fire. I wear the cordon of the Legion of Honour. No one dares doubt my courage. So, for me, good! And now, for you, what are you? You are

merchant of cocoanuts, coir, coffee, and the oil of citronelle; very respectable business, if respectably pursued. But no, you are not of that; you are not of society; you have the blot on the mercantile shield; you have—"Hullo! what the mischief is this? I say when I have read so far—"you have, *rasé*, shaved, *vos papiers*, your papers, *avec les rasoirs*, with razors,"—"what the deuce does he mean, Major, by shaving his papers with razors?"

"Ha! ha, ha," bursts out O'Leary. "Faith! Moosoo is a wag, a jister, and a pretty sevaré one too. Mane! he manes that ugly sthory anint the erasures sane in Jones's ledgers, when the criditors—but as you don't same to know it, oi'll not enloighten you. Does La Tasse say more?"

"Only that they are not on a social equality and consequently he won't fight."

"Oi whonder what they'll be afther now?"

'His Oirish blud, as he called it, was overflowing to see a "jewel," that was clear enough.

"Leave them alone, Major," say I, "it will all hush down."

But it didn't.

'When Jones got back the Captain's letter, he went straight with it to one of our best lawyers—proctors is the local name—and asked him to take proceedings against La Tasse for defamation of character; but that gentleman declined the case. However, another, not so swell, soon took it up, and filed in the District Court, over which one Duntze, of the forensic bench, was then presiding, an action, "Jones v. La Tasse," damages laid at several thousands of rupees. And Duntze gave it his sign manual, and ordered service. Perhaps he could not help doing that. But it was one thing to order, and another to

enforce. La Tasse laughed the judge to scorn; denied, as an alien, his amenability to the civil law as the case stood; insisted that he had but performed his duty to his Government, and said that he would see him, Duntze, "blowed" before he appeared either in person, or by a solicitor in his Court. And then he walked about the hot sandy streets before alluded to, buttoned up in uniform and with a big heavy regulation sword dangling at his side. In which guise and with which scimitar he established a wholesome fear, and they let him alone from handling.

'But our Rhadamanthus was not going to be cowed. What was a long sword, a dozen long swords, to him, in comparison to the strong arm of the Law? Not a doit. He issued some sort of a legal document—the name of which I can't tell you, for I don't know, but call it a writ—citing La Tasse before him for contempt of court, and he consigned it for operation to the hands of a subordinate functionary, designated a Deputy Fiscal in the present instance—a miserably poor specimen of a Eurasian, old and worn out, and literally and metaphorically without a leg to stand on.

'Furnished with the mittimus, and in a mortal funk, this effete myrmidon of justice, accompanied by half a dozen or so of individuals called peons—semi-garmentless, but gay-belt-adorned nigger constables—embarked in a boat, and were rowed towards Le Falcon. What for? Why, from under her battery, and from the cutlasses of some three hundred men, to drag ashore the captain. Could anything more out-Herod Herod than this absurdity? But, indeed, so it was planned.

'And here, not having myself witnessed the scene, I must have

recourse to friend Pill's account as he subsequently described it; but I will not inflict his rickety broken English upon your ears.

"When," said he, "the shore-boat, with the half-caste and his naked black bailiffs touched our ship's side, although we did not bear a hand in helping them up, no opposition was offered to their boarding us. They scrambled over the hammock-nettings, and came sprawling on to the deck. Sorel, the lieutenant of the watch, asked them who and what they wanted; but as, you know, he does not speak a word of English, and not one of the incomers knew a syllable of French, all that was intelligible was, 'Captain! captain!' But Dobrée, a mid, seeing that the hybrid gentleman in command had entirely omitted either to take off or even to touch his hat in respect to our quarter-deck—as, of course, is O.K.—sidles up, gently lifts it from his head, and, with a bow that would have done him service in a Paris ballroom with a reigning belle, presents it to him again, saying, 'M'sieur, votre horriblement vieux chapeau.' Upon this up went the hands of the peons mechanically to their skulls; but as the only covering they boasted of in that locality was their long, black, greased hair, gathered into a knot, and fastened with a high comblike a woman's, down dropped the paws again. It would not make a bad picture, Pringle, that scene on *Le Falcon*: her deck crowded with grinning sailors, Sorel standing stiff and starched before the group, Dobrée gracefully tendering the half-starved Eurasian his 'shocking bad hat,' and he and his niggers looking flabbergasted and awfully funky. Why not send it to your *Ponch* or other comic journal?

"Meantime De la Tasse, who was below, hearing an unusual

commotion, comes up, and inquires what the blank, blank is the blank row. My captain, so oily-tongued with you on shore, is given to hot vinegar language with us on board, believe me.

"In answer to his question, Sorel says, 'Men from the shore asking for you, sir.'

'For me—me! What the—' (I omit the expressive adjective and noun) 'do they want with me?'

'Here, sir, is the principal; he will tell you.' And he presents the Fiscal, whose teeth are chattering, whose knees are knocking together, and whose trembling fingers can hardly hold a slip of paper he has in them, beginning, 'Victoria, by the grace of God, Queen,' &c.

"Then the poor scared devil, stammering out his mission, says that he is sent—O indeed, so much against his will! but 'What can do, sir—what can do?'—to convey ashore—quietly if feasible, if not, then by *force*—Hippolyte Achille Hector de la Tasse de Sèvres, and to conduct him into the presence of his honour, Duntze, the judge.

"La Tasse, who, as you are aware, is almost Englishless, can't understand six words that are being addressed to him, and is just turning upon me to interpret, when that unfortunate monosyllable *force* is slipped out, strikes his ear, and leads him at once to a right conclusion. He turns purple with rage.

'*Force! force!* you dare to say *force* to a captain of the Navy of France on his own ship—to a *decoré* like this (pointing to the ribbons on his breast)! *Force* from such *canaille*, such naked rascalions as you! Sound the *générale*! Beat to quarters! Run in and double-shot the guns! All hands away to repel boarders! *Mes enfans, mes braves*, swamp that boat alongside! Pitch those

slaves of perfide Albion into the sea! *Force! Mon Dieu! mille tonnerres! ventrebleu! sa-c-r-e!* and he tore up and down the deck like a raving maniac. *Ma foi*, he had cause to feel insulted, but not to make an ass of himself.

"At the roll of the drum away scamper our fellows helter-skelter to their posts, most of them not knowing what was up. For a moment or two there reigns an unusual undisciplined confusion on the deck, in the midst of which I see the *teterrima causa belli*, the Fiscal, cowering under the lee bulwarks, and—but don't mention it—I whisper to him, 'Be off, or you'll catch it hard;' and, indeed, I help him to wriggle through a port and to drop into his boat. Poor effete old man, it was not his fault, this 'boystrous bataille-makeing.' When the hubbub ceases and they come to look for him, behold, there he is, pulling like grim death for the beach! But in regard to the niggers, neither I nor any one else is disposed to interfere with them, nor to cheat our 'Jacks' out of a bit of a spree; we know they won't hurt them, and they don't. But they set to work to handle them rather roughly, nevertheless. They hustle and bustle them from bow to stern, from port to starboard; they shoulder them now here, now there; they play at all manner of sailor's horse-play with them, but they are careful not to leave so much as a scratch upon one of their unctuous odoriferous skins. Then some officer calls out, 'It is enough! Out of the ship with the beggars!' Upon which half a score of our A.B.s get hold of each *mal-heureux*, and lift him clear of the bulwarks. They swing him see-saw, see-saw, backwards and forwards—alors! 'one, two, three, and overboard!' Splash, splash, splash; the six, eight 'bobbies'

are in the sea, spluttering, shaking their heads, and making for the nearest ships. Bless you, these natives are as much at home in the water as out of it, and all they suffer from is a salt-water bath, which they greatly needed."

'Thus much the doctor told us, but more that occurred under our eyes yet remains to be said.

'When Duntze saw his satellites return panic-struck and soaked, and knew that his fiat had been set at naught and despised, his "dander riz awful," to make use of a Yankee vulgarism. He was determined more than ever now to be up and doing; no Johnny Crapeau should get the better of him, not if he knew it. With which determination he interviewed the Major.'

"O'Leary," said he, "the majesty of the law has been outraged. It must be upheld; if the civil power is weak to do so, the military must aid; that is good law everywhere. Captain de la Tasse de Sèvres defames one of our most respectable European citizens—'

"Be the powers, that's new to me!" says O'Leary.

"An action is entered against him in my court. He objects to plead; I cite him; he refuses to come; and when I send my deputy De Voose and half a dozen peons on board his ship to seize—"

"You don't mane to stand there, Duntze, and tell me you thried to saize him?"

"He defied one and all, pitched my warrant into the sea, and sent the law officers flying after it."

"Well, anything more?"

"And now I want you to support justice with the sword, to let me have an escort—say Pringle and a few files of soldiers—to go back to Le Falcon and frighten the fellow ashore."

"Hivenly powers be gracious

to me!" said O'Leary, perfectly dumbfounded. "Oi'll be plane enuf now wid you, Duntze. For a wake-moinded silly man oi always tuk you; but for a bhorn tomfool never, until this bles-sid minute! Put that in your poipe and smoke it; if it don't agray wid you, you know where to foinde me. What! give you my men to make a reedeeculous demonstrashun wid? to baird a man-o'-war's-man in his own ship? to break the *intint cordial* for a palthry tuppenny-hapenny action in that thrumperry coort o' yours? Oi'll say you dashed, dashed ever so many dashes first! Hi, orderly! Carolus! Hassan! don't you hare

me? Show this gintleman the dura. The top o' the mornin' to ye, Mhister Duntze."

'And now I'll end my story in a few words. La Tasse, still furious, moved his ship that very day from the harbour to the outer anchorage, where he remained until the Government of the colony made him the *amende honorable* for their legal official's imbecility. Then he up anchor, was off, and we never saw him more.

'But a wiggling loud and long recoiled on the head of Duntze, and he was translated sharp from our station into the jungle. I wonder if he ever got out of it, and what has become of him?

GREAT-GRANDMOTHERS.

AMONG the various achievements and events for which the present long-lived Administration will hereafter be renowned, may be mentioned the accession of her Majesty Queen Victoria to two new dignities, those, namely, of Empress and great-grandmother!

To the latter venerable condition our Queen attained before she had completed her sixtieth year, a circumstance which we believe cannot be said of any of her predecessors on the throne; scarcely any of whom, indeed, lived to see their children of the third generation. There was a time—'tis sixty years since' and more—when the nation was confidently looking forward to the birth of a great-grandchild of the reigning monarch and his queen, a child who might now have been our king had he lived. Who shall say that Providence has not ordered events otherwise for the great good of this nation? Who that considers the parentage from which she sprang can wish that the Princess Charlotte had lived to succeed her father? Little did those who mourned in November 1817 imagine what compensation was in store for all who loved their country's best interests, under the rule of another princess not born until eighteen months later.

That Queen Victoria should have lived already to see her eldest daughter a grandmother seems to be in accordance with those outward signs of prosperity which, by the rules of poetical justice, such a life and such a reign as

her Majesty's deserve. And when we pray *vivat Regina*, we are inclined to add, 'And may she live to be a great-great-grandmother.'

In the classes who marry early, which are the highest and the lowest, it is not such a very uncommon thing for persons to live to be great-grandparents. Probably every country parish can produce one or two specimens among the poor. And in the annals of the great and noble, carefully preserved by such chroniclers as Sir Bernard Burke and Captain Dod, we sometimes meet with curious cases of longevity and (to coin a term) great-grandparentage. We could name, for instance, a noble duke and duchess who are great-grandparents, though wanting still two or three years of seventy; a viscountess some years younger than the present century, who has a great-granddaughter aged twelve; one earl whose son is sixty-one, and another whose grandson is thirty-seven. It is less than ten years since the widow of the twentieth Lord Grey de Ruthyn died, and had she been living now she would be, though not older than eighty-seven, a great-great-grandmother, for her ladyship was the grandmother of the late Countess of Loudoun, whose grandson, the Earl of Arundel and Surrey, was born last September.

Her Majesty's great-grandchild is the child of her daughter's daughter. As daughters usually marry at an earlier age than sons, this, no doubt, is most frequently the kind of great-grandchild who

first appears ; and the child of a son's son is less likely to be born in the lifetime of its great-grandparent. No English sovereign has ever seen such a descendant ; but *le grand monarque*, Louis XIV., after the death of the Dauphin and of the Duke of Burgundy, the Dauphin's eldest son, found that his great-grandson, the Duke's little orphan child, would be his successor. There was scarcely seventy years difference in age between the two, although two generations intervened.

The twelfth Earl of Derby was a specimen of the patriarchal English nobleman, living, as he did, to see his successors of three generations. When he died, in 1834, his grandson, the famous fourteenth Earl, was five-and-thirty, and had already acquired no little fame in the House of Commons, as the Hon. Edward Stanley ; while the son of the latter, the present Earl, was a boy of eight when his great-grandfather died. The four generations would have formed a good subject for a picture. The present Earl has received three promotions in rank by the successive deaths of his predecessors, becoming an Honourable in 1834, Lord Stanley in 1851, and Earl of Derby in 1869.

A person whose life is unusually long may live to see numerous descendants of the second, third, and even fourth generations ; but where this is the case, how many domestic bereavements, in the natural course of events, are generally found to combine with the infirmities of old age, to make the time of the 'sere and yellow leaf' a sad time of 'labour and sorrow' indeed !

Here and there touching instances of this are to be met with in the pages of 'the Peerage.' Let us trace, simply from such

data as are afforded by the bare statistics of *Burke*, the 'changes and chances,' and more especially the domestic sorrows, of one long life.

About the middle of the reign of George II., in the famous year '45, was born the Lady Louisa Tollemache, one of the fifteen children of the third Earl of Dysart. At the age of twenty she married Mr. Manners, a Lincolnshire gentleman, and in process of time she became the mother of seven children, three boys and four girls. A few years after her marriage, her father died, and was succeeded by his eldest son Lionel, as fourth Earl. Besides the death of her father, Lady Louisa had the grief of losing, early in life, three of the five brothers who had survived infancy ; and the deaths of all these three were peculiarly distressing. George, the third brother, a 'middy' of fifteen, fell from the mast-head and was killed. The next brother, John, a captain in the Navy, was slain, some years after, in a duel. Though only twenty-four, he had married, and left a son. William, the youngest brother of Lady Louisa Manners, was also a naval officer, and he perished at sea in a hurricane in his twenty-sixth year.

After these three melancholy deaths, there remained to Lady Louisa, besides the Earl, only one brother, Wilbraham, and one sister, younger than herself, married to a Mr. Halliday. The two brothers both married, but had no children, and it seemed probable that their nephew Lionel, the son of Captain the Hon. John Tollemache, would eventually succeed to the title.

Meantime, Lady Louisa's children grew up. In 1790 her eldest son married. Two years later she became a widow, at the age of forty-seven.

A few months after the death of Mr. Manners her eldest son was created a Baronet. He took the name of Talmash, and became Sir William Talmash. In the same year, 1793, that he received his baronetcy, he became, a few months later, an heir-presumptive to the Dysart Earldom, by the accidental death of his young cousin Lionel, who was killed by the bursting of a shell before Valenciennes in his nineteenth year, not long after entering the 1st Regiment of Foot-guards.

The Scotch Earldom of Dysart had been conferred by Charles I. on the son of his tutor, the Rev. William Murray, minister of Dysart, in Fifeshire. This monarch was somewhat lavish of honours where he took a fancy. For example, shortly after his accession, he honoured the Earl of Cork by creating two of his sons, little boys of eight and six, Irish peers, with the titles, respectively, of Viscount Boyle of Kinalmeaky, and Baron of Broghill. And in like manner, not content with making Mr. Murray an Earl, the King was determined that the Earldom should have every chance of lasting for ever, in spite of the first possessor having no son, by conferring it 'with remainder' to the heirs, male *and female*, of the first peer. Thus it came to his daughter, and then to her son, Sir Lionel Tolle-mache, the third Earl's grandfather.

Thus, when poor young Lionel was killed by the explosion, his two uncles being childless, there seemed, as was said above, every reason to expect that the peerage would come eventually into the family of Lady Louisa, the elder of the Earl's two sisters.

In 1799 the Earl died, and was succeeded by his only living brother, Wilbraham. By this

time, Lady Louisa, who was now fifty-four years of age, had several grandchildren; for not only had Sir William three sons and two or three daughters, but his eldest sister, Lady Heathcote, was a mother.

In 1802 Lady Louisa lost her only surviving sister, Lady Jane, who had married twice, and left four children by her first husband.

At Christmas, in 1805, when Lady Louisa was sixty, came the first great bereavement since her husband's death. Her second daughter, who had been for six years the wife of the Earl of Fife, died, leaving no children.

About ten years later, in 1816, the third daughter, the Duchess of St. Albans, died, within a few hours of the young Duke, her son, who had succeeded his father in the previous year. But before this Lady Louisa had had great trouble on account of her youngest daughter, the Countess of Stair, whose marriage was 'dissolved in 1809 in consequence of a previous contract in Scotland, on the part of the Earl, with' another lady; 'which contract,' however, 'was dissolved by the lords of session, at Edinburgh, in 1820.'

It was in 1816, the year of the death of the Duchess of St. Albans, that two of Lady Louisa's granddaughters, the two eldest daughters of Sir William Talmash, were married. In the following year, probably when she was about seventy-two, she became a great-grandmother. We say 'probably,' for the polite Burke seldom tells the age of ladies, and we are left to conjecture them from various *data*. The first great-grandson who is mentioned was the son of Mr. Talmash, Sir William's eldest son. This child was born in July 1820; but there is good reason to believe that Sir William's married daughters had children before this

date. His third son, Mr. Arthur Talmash, was married in the same year, 1820.

It was in the spring of the following year, 1821, that Lady Louisa, at the age of seventy-six, found herself suddenly raised to the peerage by the death of her only surviving brother, the fifth earl. She became Countess of Dysart in her own right, and Sir William's baronetcy was merged in the courtesy title of Lord Huntingtower, borne by the eldest sons of the Earls of Dysart.

To succeed to a peerage after the age of threescore years and ten, when the thoughts and aspirations should be more than ever directed to a heavenly inheritance, is a trial of faith which has occurred to but a few; and it is doubtful whether all such have not found this late promotion to be indeed vanity and vexation of spirit. Poor Horace Walpole was a happier man before his seventy-fifth year, when he unexpectedly succeeded his nephew as Earl of Orford. The new duties to which he had to attend were irksome to him, and he must often have pined for the greater freedom which he had enjoyed so long as 'Horry Walpole.' He *endured* the title, which it is the fashion of newspapers to say that a nobleman 'enjoys,' for seven years; but even that period is longer than a septuagenarian has any right to expect.

What changes and business-troubles her accession brought upon the Countess of Dysart, it is not for compilers of 'Peerages' to narrate; but we can fancy that her son, Lord Huntingtower, now in his fifty-seventh year, probably took the lion's share of these, relieving, as far as might be, the aged mother, whom he would expect to succeed ere long. His position as heir-apparent must

have appeared to all concerned as very temporary.

But the Countess was destined to see several of her children and grandchildren pass away before herself. In 1825 her eldest daughter, Lady Heathcote, died, and also the Hon. Caroline Talmash, Lord Huntingtower's fourth daughter. In 1830 died Mrs. Burke, the eldest daughter of Lord Huntingtower, 'leaving issue,' and in the following year her sister-in-law, Mrs. Felix Talmash.

These deaths were followed in 1833 by that of Lord Huntingtower himself. The heir-apparent to the earldom had lived to the age of sixty-seven, and had grandchildren 'in their teens,' but died before his mother. His eldest son, a man of eight-and-thirty, succeeded to the baronetcy and to the courtesy title of Lord Huntingtower.

In the following year Lady Dysart lost her only surviving daughter, Lady Laura Tollemache, formerly Countess of Stair. Mr. Frederick Talmash, the fifth son of the late Lord Huntingtower, became a widower early in the next year, 1835.

In 1837 the elder of the two surviving sons of the Countess, the Hon. John Tollemache, died. He had been married more than thirty years to the Duchess Dowager of Roxburghe, who survived him only one year. They had no children.

In August in this year, 1837, an interesting event took place in Lady Dysart's family. The youngest of her youngest son's six sons married the eldest daughter of her granddaughter, Lady Sinclair (second daughter of the deceased Lord Huntingtower); and in something less than a twelvemonth after a son was born of this marriage, whereby the venerable Countess of Dysart became that

truly *rara avis in terris*, a great-great-grandmother. Lady Sinclair had a grandson and a grandmother living at the same time!

It would be interesting to know whether the aged Countess, now ninety-three years old, was in sufficient possession of her faculties to understand in what relation this remote descendant stood to her. In the *Life of Lord Eldon* there is a touching letter from the Earl, written some years after his final resignation of the Great Seal, to his brother, Lord Stowell, when the latter was evidently entering on 'second childhood.' The writer was over eighty, and his grandson, Lord Encombe, who afterwards succeeded him, had lately become a father. The old nobleman endeavoured to explain this fact to his brother, who was some six years his senior, in very simple language, but seems to have been doubtful whether the formerly acute lawyer was capable of comprehending such a complicated case.

This is not, however, always so. Mary Somerville, when past ninety, could most intelligently work mathematical problems which would puzzle many a Wrangler; and Viscount Stratford de Redclyffe wrote and published, at the age of eighty-nine, a book on Christian evidences which was well reviewed and exhibited no signs of mental decay.

But these are very exceptional cases, and one is inclined to doubt whether the venerable Lady Dysart, at ninety-three, was able to understand that the child in question was, on his father's side, her great-grandson, and on his mother's, her great-great-grandson. It is not improbable that there was in her mind that touching confusion of generations, by which the childhood of a son or daughter is repeated in a grandchild, and the

events of the last half-century are forgotten, whilst the distant past stands out in bold outline.

Tennyson's 'Grandmother,' who from internal evidence was close upon ninety, if not more, is far more true to nature in her vivid recollection of her courting days than when, after confessing that she is 'not always certain if' her children 'be alive or dead,' she adds, with a very accurate remembrance of recent events,

'And yet I know for a truth, there's none
of them left alive;
For Harry went at sixty, your father at
sixty-five;
And Willy, my eldest born, at nigh
threescore and ten.'

But then she lapses into the former uncertainty,

'I knew them all as babies, and now
they're elderly men.'

In the same year, 1838, in which Lady Dysart's great-great-grandson was born, an uncle of the child, Captain Lionel Tollemache, died. This appears to have been the last of the many bereavements which an unusually long span of life brought to the Countess. In September 1840, at the great age of ninety-five, the venerable lady was at last 'gathered to her fathers.' Born in the 'forties' of the eighteenth century, fifteen years before the death of George II., she had lived into the 'forties' of the nineteenth century, when Queen Victoria was on the throne. She had long survived all her brothers and sisters, and had been bereaved of her husband and six of her seven children, as well as of several grandchildren. She appears to have left at her death about twenty grandchildren, and probably more than twenty great-grandchildren, besides one great-great-grandson who was more than two years old. At least six of her grandsons and several granddaughters were more than forty years old; the heir nearly forty-six, and the heir's

only son, the great-grandson of the Countess, was more than twenty.

It is not often that such a patriarchal head of a family is to be met with in modern times ; and yet, curiously enough, an instance, similar in several respects, occurs in the pages of *Burke*, and that of a life which nearly *synchronised* with Lady Dysart's.

The celebrated Mr. Coke of Holkham in Norfolk, who by scientific agriculture increased the value of his landed property to an unprecedented extent, and who represented Norfolk in the House of Commons for no less than fifty-eight years, was born about the year 1752, and therefore was some seven years younger than the Countess of Dysart. In 1775 he married, and in the following year succeeded his father as owner of the Holkham estate. His wife died in 1800, leaving him with three daughters. Of these the eldest had a few months before been left a childless widow, her husband, Viscount Andover, great-uncle of the present Earl of Suffolk, having been killed by the accidental discharge of his gun. The second daughter had married, at the very early age of fifteen, a Mr. Anson, and had several children already. Mr. Coke's youngest daughter was as yet unmarried.

In 1806, Mr. Anson was created Viscount Anson, and in the same year Lady Andover married Captain (afterwards Admiral Sir Henry) Digby, the eldest son of a former Dean of Durham, who was a younger brother of the seventh Lord Digby. By this marriage Lady Andover had two sons and daughter.

In 1812 Lady Anson's third son, a midshipman, was killed by another of those somewhat common gun accidents, on board the *Bacchante* frigate ; and in 1817

she lost her sixth son, a boy of nine. These losses were followed in the next year by the heaviest loss a wife can suffer—Lord Anson died in July 1818. In 1821 the widow lost her second daughter. Meanwhile, in August 1819 her eldest daughter had become Countess of Rosebery, and her eldest son, the second Lord Anson, had also married, and each of these had an infant daughter.

Mr. Coke was now, therefore, a great-grandfather, but he was not yet seventy years of age, and no doubt did not consider himself by any means in his dotage, for early in 1822 he married again. His second wife was a very young lady, an earl's daughter ; and before the year was over she presented him with a son and heir. Thus Mr. Coke had great-grandchildren before he had a son. Three more sons and one daughter were born during the next six years ; the youngest son being born in 1828, when his father must have been about seventy-six. At his birth, this young gentleman had a sister of fifty-one, a nephew of thirty-two, and a great-niece who was nine !

In 1827, Lady Anson's fifth son died, a young man of three-and-twenty ; and in 1830 she lost her fourth son, a naval captain, in his thirtieth year, but already a C.B. Thus of her six sons, four had been taken from her, as well as one daughter. Mr. Coke's youngest daughter married in the same year as his own second marriage, but of her family no subsequent record is given.

In 1837, on the accession of Queen Victoria, and in 1838, the year of her Majesty's coronation, many additions to, and promotions in, the Peerage were made by Lord Melbourne's Government, to commemorate these national events. The first of these 'creations' was

the earldom of Innes, conferred on the Scotch Duke of Roxburghe, and giving him a seat in the English House of Lords; and the second creation was the earldom of Leicester, to which Mr. Coke of Holkham, long known as 'the first commoner in England,' was raised at the age of eighty-five. His father's maternal uncle had been made Earl of Leicester in 1744, but the title had died with him fifteen years afterwards. His nephew Mr. Roberts had succeeded to his extensive property, and taken the name of Coke. This gentleman was the father of our Mr. Coke, who, in August 1837, was raised, *per saltum*, to the third grade of the peerage, as Earl of Leicester.

There are very few instances of a commoner being thus made an earl. Prime Ministers, indeed, like Sir Robert Walpole, William Pitt, the great commoner, and Benjamin Disraeli, have received this high honour as a befitting reward of their great political services; and the splendid victory which Admiral Sir John Jervis achieved over the Spanish fleet, in 1797, off Cape St. Vincent, obtained for him at once the earldom of St Vincent. But of commoners not thus distinguished for personal achievements, who have been made earls, instead of barons or viscounts, we cannot recall any examples during the past hundred years, except the wealthy Sir James Lowther, who was made Earl of Lonsdale in 1784, and Mr. Coke of Holkham, created Earl of Leicester in 1837.

Viscount Anson, the grandson of the latter, had been one of those peers who received promotion in 1831, the year of William IV.'s coronation, being created Earl of Lichfield. In 1838 the eldest daughter of this nobleman married, and thus the new Lord

Leicester lived to have a married great-granddaughter. Curiously enough, it was in the previous year, 1837, that Lady Dysart became a great-grandmother-in-law. And as the latter lived to have a descendant of the fourth generation, so, we have good reason to believe, did the former. For he lived for three years and a half after the marriage of Lady Louisa Anson, who certainly had children, though the dates of their births are not recorded in *Burke*.

The Earl of Leicester died in June 1842, less than two years after the other patriarchal personage of the same rank, the Countess of Dysart, but at an earlier age. He must have been just ninety at his death, but whether he had actually completed his ninetieth year we cannot ascertain. His eldest daughter (Lady Jane Digby) was sixty-five, his eldest grandson was nearer forty-seven than forty-six, and his eldest great-granddaughter was twenty-three. Two sons and four daughters of Lady Anson had married, and all had children; and the three children of Lady Jane Digby were also all married, and at least two of them had children. The venerable Lord Leicester must, therefore, have been regarded as a veritable patriarch for some time before his death, and his own young sons and daughter were to him what Joseph and Benjamin were to Jacob, the 'children of his old age.' But no doubt the many bereavements which his widowed daughter, Lady Anson, was called upon to sustain were felt also by the aged grandfather.

It is not a little remarkable that a man who was close upon seventy when he married should live to see the eldest son of that marriage a young man nineteen and a half, with only one year

and a half of minority before him. Such a youth must have looked up to his middle-aged 'nephew' as an uncle, and, indeed, the complications arising from the late second marriage of Mr. Coke may well be believed to have often been very amusing.

In 1878 a marriage took place, in which the bride and bridegroom were, both of them, descendants of the late Lord Leicester, the former being his granddaughter by his second wife, and the latter his great-great-grandson by his first. Thus the bridegroom was first cousin twice removed to his wife, and had his great-grand-uncle for his father-in-law! This couple now have a daughter, who is therefore second cousin to one of her grandfathers, and great-great-grandniece to the other.

Marvellous accounts appear in the newspapers from time to time of persons dying at an advanced age and leaving hundreds of descendants. Such are usually in the lower ranks of society, and the evidence forthcoming is not always very trustworthy. Moreover, the human race is, in some matters, highly credulous, and so far from calmly considering probabilities, is only too prone to exaggerate improbabilities for the sake of making an anecdote 'tell.'

It is, if we remember rightly, in that very interesting book, the *Life of Dr. Guthrie*, that a wonderful tale of longevity and 'great-grand parentage' occurs. A gentleman hearing that a very aged man was living on some island in

the north of Scotland, went to visit him. But before he discovered the object of his search, he met, successively, three other old men, each of whom said, 'O, it's my *fayther* you want!' The ages of the four were apparently in an ascending order of magnitude, and the visitor came away with the conviction that the four were in different generations; the first being son to the second, grandson to the third, and great-grandson to the last. The first is represented as being decidedly elderly—say sixty; and therefore the last would probably be at least one hundred and twenty years old.

But why should their visitor have supposed that the four stood in this relationship to each other? Why should the first, *e.g.* say 'It's my *fayther* you want,' to the inquirer, concerning a very old man, if he possessed, close at hand, not merely a '*fayther*,' but, what was far more extraordinary, a '*great-grandfayther*'? Surely the solution is that the first three old men were *brothers*, and each of them the *son* of the last, who may have been ninety or more.

We should be sorry to spoil a good story, but truth and probability ought not to be sacrificed to the love of the marvellous.

'I saw a ghost last night,' said a romantic person; 'it was in the form of a white rabbit.'

'Well, then,' replied a friend, 'perhaps it *was* a white rabbit.'

'O,' said the first, 'I never thought of that!'

BAGDAD AND BACK BY WATER:

New Wintering Spot.

I THINK if a few London doctors knew of the climate they would send not a few patients 'the water journey to Bagdad and back.'

Few readers probably are aware that the opening of the Suez Canal and the development of the steam traffic of the British India Steam Navigation Company (Limited) have brought these regions within easy reach of the traveller; and that in fact, without setting foot on terra firma, the enterprising seeker of new sights, new sensations, and a genial winter climate may embark in London and disembark at Bagdad on the banks of the River Tigris in the heart of Turkish Arabia. The object of the few following notes is to show how easily such a journey may be accomplished, and that within the limits of a six months' absence from England the ruins of ancient Babylon, the supposed Tower of Babel, and old Nineveh may be visited with a very little amount of fatigue and trouble.

Bagdad, the capital of the caliphs, the scene of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, will always draw upon the sympathies of an enthusiastic traveller, and the name of the old city begets visions of Sindbad the Sailor and his house, with the pavements daily sprinkled with rose-water; of Haroun-al-Raschid and his beautiful wife Zobeidee, whose tomb, still preserved, seems to give a reality to those wonderful old tales; of Jaffer the Barmecide, and Mesrour the chief Eunuch, and all the other curious personages of those bygone days.

Persons to whom an escape from the discomforts of an English winter is an object, and whose constitution wants the bracing effects of a long sea-voyage, could not find a better means of passing the months from November to April than by taking a water-journey to Bagdad and back.

If the reader will take the trouble to look at the world's map and note the route which the British-India steamers traverse, he will see that they touch at various ports in Europe, Africa, India, and Persia, and finally disembark him at Bussora in Turkish Arabia, at the extreme top of the Persian Gulf. There is no voyage made by any line of steamers which within the short space of two months shows the traveller so much of the various peoples of the world. He may see Lisbon and the Portuguese; he may see the French and Africans at Algiers; he may see the Suez Canal and gaze upon the Egyptians; he may touch at some Arab port in the Red Sea, and he will certainly touch at Aden, the outpost of British India. He will be sure to stop a day or two at Kurrachee, an Indian port, and can become acquainted with the Hindoos; and the voyage will be completed by touching at the various ports up the Persian Gulf. There is not the monotony of a long sea-voyage, like a trip to Australia or across the Atlantic. The sensations of gaining and leaving one port are hardly over before the calculations begin to be exciting as to the time when the next port

will be reached and left. The weeks pass quickly by, and the traveller finds himself living with as much ease and comfort as in his own house, and with every luxury of table and service that a well-found steamer provides. The voyage from London to Bussora is usually accomplished in from six to eight weeks. At Bussora itself there is nothing to detain the traveller, and he may disembark from the sea-going steamer into the small river steamer which runs from Bussora to Bagdad, and proceed on his river journey of about 500 miles. The Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company (Limited) have two river steamers which ply between Bussora and Bagdad. They carry the Indian mails which the British India steamboats from Kurrachee and Bombay bring up the Gulf. One of the river boats is usually in waiting to receive the mails, and the river journey is usually accomplished in from three to four days.

The accommodation on the river steamers is all that a traveller can desire. The commanders and officers are Europeans and gentlemen. The cabins are clean and well furnished, and the table provided by the commanders is first-rate. The voyage up the river fitly prepares the traveller to realise the scenes of desolation and waste which meet the eye in every direction in Turkish Arabia. Along the river banks small patches of land are cultivated; but, for the most part, nothing is to be seen but vast plains of uncultivated soil. The Arabs with their flocks and herds wander over these vast regions and find subsistence, a circumstance which to a traveller passing rapidly up the river seems a marvel. As you approach Bagdad the scenery becomes more picturesque. The banks of the

river are fringed with the date groves, and the genius of commerce at once tells you that there stands or grows the food of the people and their exportable commodity.

The climate of Bagdad from November to April is perhaps one of the most favourable and enjoyable to be found in any part of the world. The air is keen and bracing, producing great elasticity of spirit; and a ride across the open desert by one fond of exercise is at once suggestive to him of the reason why the native Arab and his steed are so famed for physical endurance. The desert air itself seems food.

If it be asked what there is to see at Bagdad, the truthful answer must be, a desolate city. More than one half of the area enclosed within the city walls is a waste, the result no doubt of the great plague of 1831, and the inundation of the river that came upon the city while the inhabitants were in the throes of the plague.

Mr. Fraser, the traveller, in his *Travels in Koordistan*, thus speaks of those events: 'On the 26th April 1831 it was affirmed at the Serai that the deaths had reached 5000 in one day! There seems no doubt that they exceeded 4000, and this out of a population which at that time did not exceed fifty or sixty thousand, for at least one third of the late inhabitants had first and last quitted the city. The water, too, had risen frightfully, and the anticipations in case of its breaking into the city were terrible. Dreadful as they were, however, they were more than realised on the two following days. That night a large portion of the wall fell, and the water rushed in full tide into the city. The quarter of the Jews was speedily inundated, and 200 houses fell at once. A part also of the wall of the

citadel fell; nor was there much hope that any house or wall which the water had reached could stand, owing to the very dissolvable nature of the cement with which the greater part was built. By the following night the whole lower part of the city was under water, and 7000 houses are said to have fallen at one crash, burying sick, the dying, and the dead with those still in health all in one common grave! It is said, and upon no mean authority, that no less than 15,000 persons, sick and well, were overwhelmed on this occasion alone. Nor when the crowded state of the yet habitable part of the city is considered, the people prevented from flying by the inundation without, is the calculation at all incredible. The few who escaped from the ruins brought the scattered reliques of their families to the houses yet remaining in the higher parts of the city, emptied by the plague or desertion, and thus furnished fresh food for the pestilence that lurked in the infected habitations which they occupied. Nothing can give a more impressive idea of the intensity of individual misery at this period than the fact that this fearful event, which at another time would not only have occupied every tongue, but called forth the most active exertions in favour of the sufferers, passed off almost without remark and without an effort to relieve them.'

Nearly half a century has passed away, but the population has not yet advanced to its former numbers, and probably never will. The wanderer through the city, however, may plainly see that many houses have been built within the last twenty years or so, and the waste area encroached upon. The present estimate of the population is about sixty to

seventy thousand, and if the vacant ground within the city walls was covered by houses built as closely as the existing ones, there would be habitable accommodation for two or three hundred thousand people.

Architectural beauty must not be looked for in Turkish Arabia. Yet there are a few venerable old mosques, with their blue enamelled minarets, that are worth gazing upon, and the view from the bridge of boats that spans the river is decidedly picturesque. Half an hour's promenade on the bridge will give the traveller the best idea of the varied races which frequent Bagdad, and make up either its permanent or temporary population.

Crowds of Persian pilgrims, Koords, Arabs, Armenians, Jews, Turks, veiled women, donkeys and horses are crossing and recrossing the whole day long. Every kind of Eastern garment in the uttermost stages of decay meets your view, so that you are forced to exclaim that the Irish beggar in his tattered clothes would appear a well-dressed gentleman by the side of a Persian pilgrim. There is no mistaking, however, the Turkish officer. Sleek and well dressed and scrupulously clean, looking every inch the real gentleman, and plainly showing that he is, amongst that motley crowd, one of the governing race. The object, however, of this paper is not to tell the traveller what he may see at Bagdad, but to suggest to him what he may do by making Bagdad the base of his travelling operations.

The modern town of Hillah, distant fifty miles from Bagdad, is on the site of a part of ancient Babylon. The road is safe, and the traveller may hire his guide and his horses or mules at Bagdad, and in six or seven days go

over all the ground, and see the ruins of ancient Babylon and the supposed Tower of Babel. The journey presents no difficulties even to ladies who cannot ride on horseback. The ingenuity of the Arab has invented a wooden chair, in which a lady can recline at her ease and be borne along by the sure-footed mules. Travellers' rest-houses are situated along the road as well as at Hillah, and the baggage mule carries the fresh and tinned provisions for daily sustenance, and the travelling rugs and mattresses for the bed at night.

The modern town of Mosul is near the site of the ancient Nineveh. A similar expedition can be made to that place; but the distance is much farther from Bagdad, and the journey to and fro would consume from two to three weeks. In making Bagdad the travellers' head-quarters, he would find no difficulties or dangers in these expeditions.

It is the long-continued journeying across the desert, marching day by day, that makes the task a laborious one, and renders it difficult to get guides and horses. Let the reader peruse the two modern works—Dr. Newman's, the *Thrones and Palaces of Babylon and Nineveh*, published in 1876 by Harper of New York, and Mr. Grattan Geary's *Ride across the Desert*—and he will at once comprehend the difference between making a long journey across the desert, and a simple expedition involving only a few days' absence from Bagdad as the head-quarters station. The two books just mentioned give the latest experiences of travellers in Turkish Arabia. It is very interesting to read them in connection with the travels made by Baillie Fraser in 1834. His work is published by Bentley, under the title of *Travels*

in *Koordistan, Mesopotamia, &c.*, and is well worth perusal. I must be allowed to quote one short passage of his. Speaking of the ruins of Babylon and the Euphrates, he says: 'The Euphrates was a far more interesting and exciting object. There is something in the living stream which you can commune with; ever changing, and yet still the same, it speaks to you as a thing of life, and says, "I am the same as in the days of old; since time was I alter not. I have seen generations pass away, and yet I remain fresh and youthful as ever." The Euphrates is the same as in the days when the captive children of Israel sat by its stream and wept; and assuredly the sight of that stream had by far more power on me, at least to call forth associations with sacred writ, than the heaps of dust, however gigantic, that lay scattered along its margin.'

Let me return to practical realities. The traveller must not expect to find hotel accommodation in Bagdad, but there is no difficulty in hiring a house or engaging any number of servants.

An unfurnished house can be hired for two or three pounds per month, and the articles, rough and useful, that are requisite to fulfil the interior economy of an Eastern household can be either hired or bought in the bazaars at reasonable rates. Provisions are cheap and good. English is spoken a good deal amongst the rising generation of Bagdadees, and French is the language known to most of the official class, and is used in the telegraph department of the Turkish Government.

Does the Londoner, innocent of all Eastern experiences, ask the very sensible questions, What about the currency of the country? What coin must I carry? The answer is—he need not carry any

at all with him. He can pay for his return tickets in London before he starts, and by opening a credit with the firm of Lynch & Company, who are the managers of the river steamers and carry on their business at Bagdad, he can draw his money at Bagdad in English gold or Turkish coin or Indian rupees, just as will suit best.* There is a market and exchange value in Bagdad for most of the coins of the world. Does the Londoner ask the still further sensible question, How, being an utter stranger to the East, could I find a house? The answer is—Mr. Grattan Geary's book supplies the name of a man who is a traveller's perfect *vademecum*, Yoosuf Kismo, quondam butler to the manager of the firm of Lynch Brothers at Bagdad. Yoosuf is a Christian, and a Bagdadee by birth, and probably could always be found or heard of through that firm at Bagdad. But there are limits to even matters of detail for the guidance of travellers, and I must forbear.

* The writer should perhaps apologise for mentioning this firm's name; but he assumes that, 'for value received,' they would give bills on their foreign house.

One word in conclusion on the modern aspect of Eastern politics. This, and the question of British interests in the East, and the so-called English protectorate of Asiatic Turkey,—these, be they mere figures of speech or otherwise, point very significantly to a revival of the renown of ancient Bagdad. Two or three months spent in that old city would enable the Londoner to appreciate the Turk and the Arab at their true worth; and if about two centuries of Turkish government have not availed to bring wealth and prosperity into those desert regions, he may not unreasonably conclude that the main causes are the poverty of the Turkish Government and the intractableness of the Arab people. At any rate, the traveller could judge for himself what he deemed to be British interests in those Eastern parts, and could form his own ideas whether the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates are fated, in the future destinies of the world, to own the sovereignty of the British power, and whether the world would be benefited by such ownership.

OUR LONDON NOTE-BOOK.

AN ingenious journalist has just made the startling discovery that one of the three mummies now being exhibited at Ludgate Circus bears an extraordinary likeness to Lord Beaconsfield. The mummy in question was once, there is every reason to believe, Antiochus Soter, King of Syria, and I can vouch for the resemblance which it bears to Lord Beaconsfield, having had the curiosity to test the accuracy of the discoverer's statement. But not content with tracing this physical likeness, my ingenious journalist must needs find the elements also of a mental, moral, and political likeness; he asks sententiously, 'Is it not more than possible and probable that his lordship has descended from the great Syrian King and Warrior, Antiochus Soter, King of Syria? *Between the actions of the illustrious dead and the illustrious living, to whom we have referred, there is also a marvellous similarity,* and the question we would suggest to intellectual and reflective minds is this: Are organisations which resemble each other in form, shape, and likeness subject to the same mental influences, and are they likely to follow out the same course of conduct? It is said that history repeats itself. Is Antiochus Soter being repeated in Lord Beaconsfield? If so, coming events will be embalmed in the memory of all living unto the latest moment of their lives.' Now as my ingenious journalist does not condescend to give his readers the slightest clue to the 'course of

conduct' pursued by this venerable mummy when its withered skin was inspired with life, or offer any proof of 'the marvellous similarity' 'between the actions of the illustrious dead and the illustrious living,' I naturally rushed to my Smith's *Classical Dictionary* in some trepidation to obtain a forecast of the Beaconsfield policy of the future. How amply my curiosity was gratified will be understood when I quote precisely what I found there recorded of the sovereign whose mummy is now on show at Ludgate Hill: 'Soter (reigned B.C. 280-261) was the son of Seleucus I., the founder of the Syrian kingdom of the Seleucidae. He married his stepmother, Stratonice, with whom he fell violently in love, and whom his father surrendered to him. He fell in battle against the Gauls in 261.' That Lord Beaconsfield, when Mr. Disraeli, might have married his stepmother, had he had one, and had his father, with the off-handed paternal generosity of Seleucus, consented to surrender her to his son, I am willing to admit for the sake of argument; but where are the other 'actions of the illustrious dead' which bear such a 'marvellous similarity' to those of 'the illustrious living'? And are we to conclude that our veteran Premier will die sword in hand fighting in the streets of Paris, as the late Emperor Louis Napoleon once prophesied he himself should die in the streets of London? If not, I do not quite see how or where 'Antiochus Soter is being

repeated in Lord Beaconsfield; and my ingenious journalist's theory melts into thin air.

Has it ever occurred to any one that by importing these mummies and Cleopatra's Needles and similar Oriental antiquities into England, we are laying up an infinitude of perplexity and trouble for the archæologist of the far-distant future? In those days of England's annihilation, which even Mr. Bright does not think impossible of realisation, when Macaulay's 'New Zealander,' and Volney's 'some wanderer like myself,' and Horace Walpole's 'curious traveller from Lima,' and Henry Kirke White's 'savage sitting on the stone,' and Shelley's 'Transatlantic Commentator' shall visit the ruins of London to muse, or sketch, or declaim, each according to his peculiar tastes, what dire confusion the digging up of the Needle from the bed of the Thames, or the mummy of Antiochus Soter from the foundations of the Holborn Viaduct, will create amongst the archæologists of the period! How they will wrangle and debate and abuse one another over these puzzling relics of Britain's past! Why the 'Row upon the Stanislaus' will be nothing to it. Until, perhaps, it is gravely settled that the Needle must have been a monument to Lord Beaconsfield, and the mummy all that is left of Mr. Gladstone. As to the results of the excavation of the ruins of the British Museum, imagination refuses to picture the hopelessly insoluble archæological conundrums which will distract antiquarian society.

I learn from Mr. George Barnett Smith's interesting and exhaustive *Life of Mr. Gladstone*, that the ex-Premier was much given to dabbling in verse in his youthful days. It is a curious fact that

this unsuccessful wooing of the coy Muse has been a feature in the career of most great orators, and the lines which Mr. Smith quotes from an early effort in verse of Mr. Gladstone's on 'Richard Cœur de Lion' remind me of that one line of Cicero's which Juvenal has 'damned to everlasting fame:'

'O Fortunatam, natam me consule Romam!'

Of which the satirist says with mournful sarcasm:

'Autoni gladios potuit contemnere, si sic omnia dixisset.'

If Mr. Gladstone had never done anything better than 'Richard Cœur de Lion,' he would never have been the great leader of all English-speaking Liberalism.

Girolamo Savonarola, too, another of the world's great orators, courted the muse with as little success at the outset of his career. Had he kept to writing those lugubrious religious lyrics in which his first impressions of the world's wickedness and need of reform expressed themselves, he would never have roused Florence from her apathy, or met that awful doom in the Piazza della Signoria. And yet who is there who would wish that Cicero, or Savonarola, or Gladstone, had cultivated his less than mediocre poetical powers at the expense of his eloquence?

Some recent libel cases have reminded me of a playful suggestion of Addison's in No. 457 of the *Spectator*. 'I have often,' he says, 'thought that a news-letter of whispers, written every post and sent about the kingdom, after the same manner as that of Mr. Dyer, Mr. Dawkes, or any other epistolary historian, might be highly gratifying to the public as well as beneficial to the author. By whispers, I mean those pieces of news which are communicated as secrets, and

which bring a double pleasure to the hearer; first, as they are private history, and, in the next place, as they have always in them a dish of scandal. These are the two chief qualifications in an article of news which recommend it, in a more than ordinary way, to the ears of the curious. Sickness of persons in high posts, twilight visits paid and received by ministers of state, clandestine courtships and marriages, secret amours, losses at play, applications for places, with their respective successes or repulses, are the materials in which I chiefly intend to deal. I have two persons, that are each of them the representative of a species, who are to furnish me with those whispers which I intend to convey to my correspondents. The first of these is Peter Hush, descended from the ancient family of the Hushes. The other is the old Lady Blast, who has a very numerous tribe of daughters in the two great cities of London and Westminster.

The character of Peter Hush is playfully and gently drawn; he is a comparatively harmless old gossip, so far, that is to say, as any gossip can be harmless. But there is scathing satire in this portrait of Lady Blast. 'The Lady Blast, you must understand, has such a particular malignity in her whisper, that it blights like an easterly wind and withers every reputation it breathes upon. She has a particular knack at making private weddings, and last winter married five women of quality to their footmen. She can turn a visit into an intrigue, and a distant salute into an assassination. She can beggar the wealthy, and degrade the noble. In short, she can whisper men base or foolish, jealous or ill-natured; or if occasion requires can tell you the slips of their great-grandmothers

and traduce the memory of honest coachmen that have been in their graves above these hundred years.' That was written in August 1712, a hundred and sixty-seven years ago; yet it seems to me that Lady Blast is still in December 1879 enjoying a hale and vigorous old age with none of her noble powers unimpaired, and the *Spectator's* satirical suggestion of a 'newspaper of whispers' has blossomed into an accomplished fact.

Apropos of the *Spectator*, I was told the other day a rather smart retort which a young Bengalee made to an English lady. The lady is young, fast, fashionable, and slangy. The Bengalee is an excellent specimen of 'Young Hindostan,' clever, well-read, polished, but undeniably conceited and affected. Quoth the lady patronisingly, 'How well you speak English, Mr. Mookerjee! I have seldom met a foreigner who spoke our language so fluently and correctly.' 'My dear madam,' returned Mr. Mookerjee, a little nettled at the patronising tone, 'I ought to speak English better than most English ladies and gentlemen, because I obtained my knowledge of the tongue from the *Spectator*; and *they* pick up theirs from their lady's-maids and grooms.' It was a fair retort, though rude. To hear good English spoken by educated young Englishmen and Englishwomen is not by any means a common occurrence. I do not allude only to the hideous and idiotic fashion of introducing the slang of stable-boys and costermongers into polite conversation, but to the habit of speaking villainous English which children too often contract nowadays by being left so much in the society of servants. It takes a good deal of hard teaching sometimes to undo the vicious effects of inordinate

familiarity with the peculiar ideas of grammar current in the nursery and the servants' hall.

A very amusing work might be compiled by collecting the flowers of modern American pulpit rhetoric. Your 'heated pulpiteer' is nothing nowadays if not metaphorical. He pelts you with tropes and similes; he arrays before you a perfect joss-house of images—the more *outré*, the more grotesque the image, the better. Perhaps no one has a finer stock of such images than Dr. Talmage. Here are two specimens, which, as illustrations of the religious oratory which finds favour in some large cities and in some circles of society, are worth preserving here. The preacher, discoursing on the value of congregational singing, says: 'When Londonderry, Ireland, was besieged many years ago the people inside the city were famishing, and a vessel came up with provisions; but the vessel ran on a river-bank and stuck fast. The enemy went down with laughter and derision to board the vessel, when the vessel gave a broadside fire against the enemy, and by the shock was turned back into the stream, and all was well. O ye who are high and dry on the rocks of melancholy, give a broadside fire of song against your spiritual enemies, and by holy rebound you will come out into the calm waters.'

The spirited revival of *Rob Roy* by Mrs. Bateman at New Sadler's Wells (allow me to congratulate her on the pretty and comfortable new house) recalls to me several incidents in connection with its first production at Edinburgh, which I have not seen noticed anywhere, perhaps because few persons except myself have had the privilege of listening to yarns unnumbered of the old

Edinburgh Theatre from one most deeply interested in it. That *Rob Roy* was first produced in February 1819, that it ran for forty-one nights without intermission, and that it brought a net profit of 3000*l.* to the treasury, these are facts that I suppose some of our many erudite and accomplished dramatic critics must already have recorded. But I think I am safe in saying that the following curious and interesting facts have not been published. When George IV. visited Edinburgh in 1822 he selected *Rob Roy* for the performance on the night of his attending the theatre in 'state, partly as a national compliment, and partly as a personal distinction to Sir Walter Scott.' Charles Mackay was, of course, 'the Bailie,' Murray was Captain Thornton, and Mrs. H. Siddons Diana Vernon. Edinburgh was crammed with loyal Scots from every part of Scotland, and the theatre had what the Yankees call 'a good time.' Edmund Kean, who had been booked for a 'star' engagement long before the Royal visit was thought of, was in Edinburgh at the time, and he was bitterly chagrined that one of *his* plays was not selected instead of *Rob Roy*. It was expected by many that he would study the part of Rob for the occasion, but he was too proud to do that. He believed that the King was personally hostile to him, and had resolved deliberately and publicly to insult him, and he said to Mr. Calcraft, 'I am a greater man than ever I expected to be; I have a king for my enemy!'

The history of the Edinburgh Theatre, and especially under the management of Mr. W. H. Murray, when Sir Walter Scott, Hogg, Lockhart, 'Christopher North,' the Ballantynes, and other shining lights of Scottish literature were

almost nightly visitors to the theatre and guests in the green-room, would be well worth writing. I have before me now a curious and interesting statement of the receipts of Mrs. Siddons, 'the great Sarah,' on the occasion of her first visit to Edinburgh. It runs thus :

Half of the house (deducting expenses) for nine nights	£467	7	7
The Committee's Purse.	200	0	0
Benefit at raised prices.	180	0	0
Presents, plate, gold, tickets, &c.	120	0	0
	£967	7	7

That would be reckoned a very small sum for a modern 'star,' but it was considered enormous then. 'The Committee's Purse,' by the way, was subscribed by a number of noblemen and gentlemen as an additional inducement to the 'goddess of tragedy' to visit the 'modern Athens.'

Mr. Sala is, if he will forgive the expression, the world's 'Man about Town.' I doubt whether there has ever been a single person yet who more thoroughly knew and understood the humours of town life from China to Peru. But he is more than a 'man about town;' his observation extends more widely and penetrates more deeply than that of the mere *blasé habitué* of clubs and theatres and restaurants. He probes every *stratum* of society, and is as conversant with Petticoat-lane as he is with New Bond-street. I have often thought that few things could be more agreeable than to stroll with Mr. Sala through the streets of any great European city, but especially London and Paris. I detest sight-seeing after the regulation British-tourist fashion; but I dearly love 'loafing' about streets and alleys and docks and wharves and railway-stations, wherever, in short, mankind

gathers itself into a focus. Such a 'loaf' I have just been enjoying, in imagination, with Mr. Sala as, figuratively speaking, I strolled arm in arm through Paris with him in the pleasant pages of *Paris Herself Again*. I cannot conscientiously say that I found him equally good company in every one of the forty-three chapters through which I enjoyed his society. Unlike Mr. Sala, I do *not* 'find such things as soap and candles, chocolate and pickles, upholstery and electroplate, quite as interesting as the habitations of mankind and the ways of men.' I did not, I confess with shame, care much for the Exhibition part of Mr. Sala's two entertaining volumes, not because Mr. Sala did not act the part of showman to perfection, as indeed he always does, but simply because I am a heathen in these matters. I am not interested in Exhibitions. Like Gallio, I 'care for none of these things.' But this I will say, that twenty-eight out of those forty-three chapters I enjoyed as thoroughly as anything Mr. Sala has written. And that, remember, is a very exceptional percentage of enjoyment to find in any book nowadays.

Had I not tasted the flavour of the book by occasionally skimming the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, I think Mr. Sala's preface would have filled me with forebodings. It is a gloomy and melancholy preface—a bilious ebullition—a picture of life seen through a jaundiced eye—

'Eye to which all order festers, all things here seem out of joint.'

Listen, for example, to the genial showman speaking thus, and you can hardly believe in his identity: 'I was in bad health when I went to Paris. I cannot ever be in good health again, and half at least of my days are spent in the

acutest physical pain; and every dinner which I cannot have the choosing of myself is so much bodily and mental torture, and another nail in my coffin. And I abhor *tables d'hôte*; holding, as I do, that it is abominable tyranny to be forced to dine with people whom you certainly would not ask to dine with you. The majority of English people whom you meet at a foreign *table d'hôte* are either sulky or silly.' And so on, and so on. But the bile is all exhausted in the preface—and who will not admit that some license in this respect is not permissible to a man suffering as Mr. Sala was?—who will not admire the more the *verve*, the sprightliness, the playfulness, the genial pleasantry, the gentle satire, when he knows how terribly against the grain to the writer anything but petulance and irritability and cynicism must sometimes have been!

But to the book itself. Let us see what Mr. Sala has noted as the main features of *Paris Herself Again*. I read early in the first volume: 'The wounds of 1870 are no longer green, but they are not yet cicatrised. The cruel gashes, materially, are healed—for France seems to be busier and wealthier than ever she was—but, morally, the deep hurts are only skinned over; and by the Republican section of the press and the people the German is as cordially hated, and the spoliation of Alsace and Lorraine is as bitterly resented, as ever.' Well, perhaps the remembrance of those wounds may be longer in effacing itself than optimists suppose. We have been imagining for many years past that the *entente cordiale* between England and France has been so completely established, that the memories of Waterloo are wholly obliterated. Yet I find that Mr.

Sala does not think it superfluous to write in this strain: 'One reads no words of abuse against "Perfidious Albion," who "French commerce would destroy, and monopolise to herself the Empire of the Seas." I have scanned a dozen papers this morning without finding any indignant protest against the Mediterranean being turned into "an English lake;" nor have I been able to meet with any reference to the contingency of Lord Sandon's steam-plough interfering with the vested interests of France in the Holy Places. All this strikes me with the greater force, inasmuch as I can remember how, in 1839 and 1840, France in general, and the Parisians in particular, were in a white-hot fit of passion with England touching Syria and the Holy Places.' And again, in writing of the close of the Exhibition, he quotes the remark of a confidential *brigadier*: 'Car, voyez-vous le Prince de Galles c'est l'ami de la France; et nous lui devons quelque chose;' adding, 'for my part, I think it would be equally satisfactory to all and sundry to know that ninety-nine Frenchmen out of every hundred are of the same opinion with the worthy *brigadier*, and that the last embers of enmity between us and a gallant and intelligent people, whom we fought tooth and nail on and off for eight hundred years, but who are now our fast friends, have been stamped out.' It is sixty-four years since Waterloo, and it is only now that an Englishman feels justified in saying that the last 'embers of enmity' between France and England have been stamped out! Will some observer of men and manners as keen-eyed as Mr. Sala be able to say the same of the enmity between France and Germany in the year of grace 1945?

One cannot help thinking as one

reads Mr. Sala's charming gossip that the title of the book is something of a misnomer: Paris is *not* quite 'herself again.' Greed, for example, is a far more conspicuous passion than Glory. Parisians have a keener eye for business than ever, but very little of the old *penchant* for military parade. Many old features of Parisian society, if not extinct, are so changed as to be almost unrecognisable. In a characteristic essay Mr. Sala mourns the disappearance of the *grisette*, and there are other familiar types too that have as completely vanished from Parisian as the 'cockney sportsman' from London life. There is little of the old light-hearted gaiety. The old palaces of pleasure, indeed, are reopened and regilt; but those who frequent them, the women especially, have lost the old, almost innocent, delight in gaiety for its own sake, and have become the mere mechanical automata of vice. We follow Mr. Sala into the Bois, the Temple, the boulevards, and everywhere we find that Paris is changed in the spirit, though not always in the letter, of its manners. 'The French,' Mr. Sala says, with an unmistakable sigh, 'seem to be growing a very matter-of-fact people. Their dreams of military glory have indeed received so complete and so crushing an awakening into humiliation at the hands of the Germans—they have been so unceremoniously made aware that there is a nation more militant and more powerful in European councils than they are—that they seem to have resolved to live in the future substantially for themselves, and to devote their entire energies to the acquisition of francs and centimes. . . . The ambition of the existing French *bourgeoisie* does not appear to go beyond the possession of the most attractive shops in the world; and then another

shop, the Exposition Universelle.' A nation of shopkeepers! Shade of Napoleon, we fling the retort back in thy teeth; but not with malignant spite, rather with playful irony, for the sooner all nations follow suit, the better for the peace and happiness of the world.

I might go on quoting from these volumes *ad infinitum*, but space forbids me, and besides, let the reader go to the fountain-head for his enjoyment. For my part let me say in conclusion that the chapters headed, 'That dear old Palais Royal,' 'The nice old Gentleman,' 'On sundry old Women,' 'The Ghost of the Grisette,' 'The Seamy Side of Paris Life,' 'Easily pleased,' and 'The little Red Man,' are as good as anything Mr. Sala has written, and I fancy there are some hundreds of thousands of people who know what that praise means. I must not forget to add that the book is embellished with four hundred illustrations by Bertall, Cham, Gill, and half-a-score of other noted French artists and caricaturists. It thus forms a complete picture of modern Parisian life, and the man or woman must be hard to please indeed who cannot pick some half-hours of genuine amusement out of *Paris Herself Again*.

'Stands Scotland where she did?' Looking at her from a religious point of view, I think I may safely answer that question in the affirmative. Here is a proof of the continued and vigorous existence of those stern Sabbatarian principles which have ever been Scotia's pride. A lady in London, who holds notoriously advanced Ritualistic opinions, lately engaged a Scotch girl as servant. The mistress was exceedingly anxious that the maid should be converted to 'the true faith,' from a Ritualistic

point of view. Accordingly attempts were made to undermine the Scotch lassie's Presbyterian orthodoxy, and finally the girl was induced to visit a famous Ritualistic church one Sunday evening. On her return she was anxiously interrogated by her mistress, and asked if she did not think the service was 'beautiful.' Whereupon she cautiously replied: 'Eh, yes, mem; it's a verra pritty play, na doot; but ye tauld me it was kirk I was gaun to, else I wad na hae gane, for it's no richt to look at such doin's on the Sawbath.'

Does any one, I wonder, remember a bulky, handsome, and costly quarto published some fifteen years ago under the title of *Astra Castra: Experiments and Adventures in the Air*, by Christopher Hatton Turnor? I came across it for the second time a few days ago, and found it very entertaining reading. It is a complete and exhaustive collection of everything that has been done and nearly everything that has been written by ambitious aeronauts from the time of Icarus and Daedalus to our own. The work is copiously illustrated by the process of photo-zincography, which to the uninitiated can hardly be distinguished from etching. It was curious that the day after I had been perusing this *livre de luxe* devoted to the art of flying I should have had brought under my notice a somewhat similar work on the subject of natation, or rather, to be more precise, bathing. The relations of man to air and water respectively have thus been forcibly contrasted in my mind. I am not, however, about to discuss the reflections raised by the contrast, but simply say a few words about Mr. Andrew Tuer's fine *livre deluxe* entitled *Luxurious Bathing*, illustrated by twelve original folio etchings, and six etched initial

letters by Mr. Sutton Sharpe. It must be at once admitted that the etchings have very little to do with the text. They are sketches of river, lake, and sea, but beyond the fact that there is water in all of them, they have nothing to do with bathing. The folio etchings are not so pleasing as the initial letters, which may perhaps be accounted for by the fact that in the former Mr. Sutton Sharpe has selected bits of scenery so bare and bleak, so devoid of trees or foliage or any of the softer and more voluptuous features of landscape, that they convey an impression of hardness at first sight which closer inspection shows to be unwarranted. In the initial letters there is much delicate and exquisite workmanship, and there can be no doubt that Mr. Sharpe is a master of his craft. The letterpress is a fine specimen of the bold old-style type, and the paper and binding are massive and sumptuous.

Mr. Andrew Tuer advocates the use of the day-bath in a more luxurious, enjoyable, and beneficial form than is usually practised, and his suggestions have considerable hygienic value. It is singular that the luxury of bathing is not anything like so popular a form of Sybaritism in this age of civilisation as it was in classic ages. Homer tells us how the Trojans revelled in hot baths, and it is well known to what excess the Romans carried the practice of luxurious bathing. Seven, eight, and twelve baths in a day formed the ordinary *quantum* of a Roman gentleman's ablutions. And the Emperor Titus undoubtedly died from bathing to excess. There can be no question, moreover, that our own Celtic and Teuton ancestors were far more cleanly in their habits and patronised water far more liberally than their descendants. In the

Middle Ages, however, I suspect the practice of bathing had fallen into disuse. Otherwise it is difficult to see why our own Henry IV. should have established the 'Order of the Bath.' He conferred the insignia of that order of knighthood, it will be remembered, upon forty-six esquires who had watched all night on the eve of his coronation, and had *washed themselves* in the morning! From which I conclude that other gallant knights and esquires had *not* washed themselves. Whether Henry intended simply to encourage bathing and the habit of morning tubs I am not prepared to say, but it certainly looks like it. Mr. Tuer's book is precluded by its price from being popular, but if it should encourage luxurious bathing among the rich, I am sure that is a form of Sybaritism which few will grumble at. For there is much after all in Charles Wesley's maxim that cleanliness is next to godliness, and for my own part I think that soap and water and constant bathing will be one of the most active agents in the regeneration and reformation of the lower classes.

The History of the British Turf is a title which will at once attract the attention of sportsmen and raise high expectations of agreeable and entertaining reading. It did so, at any rate, in my case, and I felt grateful in anticipation to Mr. James Rice for the fare which I was sure he had provided for me. I should, perhaps, hardly be speaking the truth were I to say that those high expectations were entirely realised. Mr. Rice has compiled a very useful historical work, and has obviously devoted much time and research to his subject, but the book is not written in the style I expected. That, of course, is not Mr. Rice's fault, but mine. He has done his work well accord-

ing to the plan he had mapped out, and his two volumes are unquestionably the most compact, concise, and comprehensive history of the Turf that has yet appeared. But somehow Mr. Rice does not seem to write *con amore*, as the 'Druid' would have done. One would have liked a little more anecdote, a little more personal colouring, a little more graphic description of notable events in Turf lore, a little more of the racy chit-chat and gossip that sportsmen love. Mr. Rice will no doubt retort that his plan did not admit of such treatment of the subject, and that had he dwelt lovingly over such minutiae his two volumes would have swelled to four. I feel that the retort would be a just one, so I will cease to grumble, and be thankful to Mr. Rice for the plain solid fare, the 'cut-and-come again' sort of good old English roast-beef, so to speak, which he has set before me, instead of the light 'kick-shaws' which my vitiated modern palate hankered after.

I observe that Mr. Rice passes Queen Anne over with but scant notice; less, I think, than she deserves. For the placid, heavy-featured, gross-feeding Queen was a liberal patron of the Turf. It was she who first established the Royal Gold Cups in the north; for which, by the way, she invariably entered her own horses, though, strange to say, she was never successful till the memorable York Summer Meeting of 1714. And on the very morning, July 30th, when her brown horse Star won for her Majesty her first and last great victory on the turf, she was seized with apoplexy, and remained unconscious until the 1st of August, when she died. So she never knew of her triumph. The news of her death was brought to

York by express, and was made known on the race-course on the afternoon of August 2d, just after the first race had been run. The sports were at once stopped; and the large concourse of nobility and gentry—having attended the Lord Mayor and the Archbishop to proclaim George I.—hurried off to London post haste, for they knew how energetically the Jacobites had been plotting, and that before many weeks had passed they would probably have to fight for their new king and their own estates and heads. Never I suppose, in the annals of the Turf, has a race-meeting broken up under more momentous and agitating circumstances than the York Summer Meeting of 1714.

In his list of notable jockeys Mr. Rice omits to mention the famous Yorkshire jockey, John Jackson, who won the St. Leger eight times, and whose last win was on Theodore in 1822, against whom Jem Bland at the Salutation, on the morning of the race, betted 100 guineas to a walking-stick, not 1000 guineas, as Mr. Rice has it. Jackson himself wrote a very graphic description of that extraordinary race, which I have in my possession, but which seems to have escaped Mr. Rice's notice. The rout of the thimblemen at Doncaster, an incident which deserved, I think, more than the mere passing mention which Mr. Rice gives it, took place in 1830, not 1829, and it was not the military, but the mounted tenantry of the neighbouring nobility and gentry, headed by Lord Wharncliffe, Lord Milton, the Hon. W. Duncombe, Mr. George Savile Foljambe, and Mr. Beckett Denison, assisted by the local police, that broke up once and for all that formidable confederacy of scoundrels. Mr. Rice, among his Turf celebrities, gives Jemmy Hirst

of Rawcliffe, but omits an almost equally grotesque personage of later days, 'Jerry the List-crier,' whose singular figure, clad in the most wonderful garments, of every diversity of shape and colour, was familiar on every race-course in England thirty years ago, and who had once the astounding effrontery to offer himself *as a candidate for the borough of Wells!*

It is somewhat startling to find the honoured name of Reginald Heber figuring among chroniclers of the Turf as the author of *An Historical List of Horse Matches* in 1753. Is it possible that this was an ancestor of the charming poet and devoted Bishop of Calcutta? Mr. Rice does not help us to an answer; and, indeed, the coincidence of name does not seem to have occurred to him.

Of Mrs. Thornton and her famous matches, Mr. Rice gives interesting details; but he omits to state that Colonel Thornton was not the husband, but only the 'protector of that lady.' She was the daughter of a watchmaker at Norwich; she and her sister eloped from that city in the same season, the one with Colonel Thornton, the other with Captain William Flint, afterwards Mrs. Thornton's antagonist in her most memorable match. In future notes I shall have some curious stories to tell of Alicia Thornton, *alias* Meynell, which I think have never yet found their way into print.

Mr. Rice has a good story of Baron Martin which I do not remember to have heard before. It is as follows: 'When travelling as judge on the Western Circuit, he (the Baron) was asked to dine with the Warden of Winchester College. The evening passed very pleasantly, and after bidding his

guest good-night, the venerable Warden turned to a friend and said, "The judge is a man of great common sense and shrewdness; but for a gentleman he is the most ignorant man I ever met. He had never even heard of William of Wykeham!" As Baron Martin drove away in his carriage from the Warden's Lodge he exclaimed to his Marshal, "Well, for a learned man, the Warden is the most ignorant man I ever met, for he did not know that John Day had training stables at Danebury!"

In the pleasant lyric of the late Mortimer Collins, which appears in the Christmas Number of *London Society*, the poet asks:

'Ah, what would say the Suffolk girl
In these days of advanced opinion,
If asked to yield but one bright curl
That veils her voluminous *chignon*?'

I think I can venture to answer that query by reference to the conduct of a young Scotchwoman under somewhat similar circumstances. A young lady of Glasgow, not so very long ago, sued a hairdresser for despoiling her of part of her hair, and obtained 30*l.* damages. The barber was charged with cutting off *ten* inches of hair, when he should only have cut off *one* inch; and the jury, by their verdict, showed the high value they placed upon natural as distinguished from artificial locks. I gather from this that the cases in which a lady can boast of wearing a *coiffure* composed entirely of her own luxuriant tresses must be very rare; and I have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Mortimer Collins's 'Suffolk girl,' had she lived nowadays, would have summarily sued for heavy damages any one who attempted to rob her of her precious natural curls. If beauty can 'draw us by a single hair,' she surely has a right to charge highly for her locks.

These capillary problems recall to me a capital story which I once heard when dining at the mess of a gallant regiment which has lately covered itself with fresh laurels. Once upon a time, in the good old days of John Company, a batch of fifty cadets from England, young greenhorns of the most verdant type, were, just after their arrival, despatched from Calcutta up country. They went to report themselves to the Brigade-Major of the district, and they surprised that distinguished officer in the act of washing a head (his own) round, smooth, and bald as a billiard-ball. The Major, for the first time in his life, was taken at a disadvantage—his long-cherished secret was in danger; but he was equal to the occasion. A quick glance at the unwelcome intruders assured him that they were all new hands. He recovered himself immediately, and said with dignity, 'I shall take you at once, and present you to the General commanding the district. But, gentlemen,' he added, with an admirably assumed air of amazement, 'how is this? You are not shaved according to regulation; in this country we all shave our heads. I give you a couple of hours to get your heads shaved as smooth as mine, and then I will present you to the General.' The innocents meekly obeyed, and were led to headquarters by the Major, who on entering the hall slyly slipped out his wig, and, unperceived by his victims, popped it on his head. He entered the General's room, and gravely introduced to his superior officer what the General supposed to be fifty young fever convalescents with shaven crowns, just discharged from the hospital. Of course the Major was chaffed about his wig, but it was generally thought that the veteran had the best of the joke.

JUNIUS JUNIOR.

A 'SOCIETY' GRAMMAR FOR YOUNG LADIES.

COMPOSED BY A CANDIDATE FOR THE CHAIR OF PHILOLOGY AT GIRTON COLLEGE.

You complain, my dear Lucy, that grammar is dry,
That Murray and Morris are stupid;
Quite true, dear; and so I propose that we try
The grammar of Plutus and Cupid.

Two Articles only can any one need—
The definite *the*, as *the* man;
And indefinite *a*, as *a* flower, *a* weed,
A purpose, *a* fancy, *a* fan.

A Noun is the name of a person or thing,
An Adjective shows of what kind,
As a *splendid old* mansion, a *costly gold* ring,
A *full* purse, or a *well-balanced* mind.

Of *concrete* and *abstract* we easily treat
By viewing the process in action:
Let a man steal your bricks, then the *bricks* are *concrete*,
But the *theft* is a case of abstraction.

Declensions are simple. Young girls, as a rule,
Should practise an elegant carriage,
Or run through a novel; but that girl's a fool
Who declines a good offer of marriage.

Three *cases* 'tis well to distinguish at once,
The *subject*, *possessive*, *objective*;
The words, I, mine, and me, make it plain to a dunce,
And your brain, dear, 's by no means defective.

As to *number*, some license is often allowed:
Country folk say, 'Them parks is quite rural';
Though lovers are *singular*, ladies are proud
To talk of their own in the plural.

As to Pronouns, their names will explain what they mean;
It's in place of a Noun that they stand:
That's demonstrative when a man calls you 'my queen,'
And squeezes your waist or your hand.

Interrogative Pronouns are *who*, *which*, and *what*,
Introducing some question or other,
As, 'Who is he?' 'How much a year has he got?'
'Which inherits—this youth or his brother?'

A sweetheart's relations their answer defer,
 Till they know the young man's antecedents ;
 So in grammar the *relatives* always refer
 To matters or persons precedent.

Verbs are active or passive, and which you should choose
 Must depend on your view of the action.
 I hate *to be praised* and I love *to abuse*—
 Praise is always more dull than detraction.

All transitive Verbs have an object in view ;
 The neuter are those that have none :
 While those *amass* fortunes and *make* much ado,
 These *loiter* or *bask* in the sun.

Of some it is plain that they are not all there ;
 We commonly call them *defective*.
S'en aller's the French for 'to go,' you're aware ;
 But we English don't heed the *reflective*.

Moods of Verbs, as of men, every change undergo,
 Now *commanding*, now stoutly *asserting* ;
 And again, with *provisos*—if, since, or although—
 All promptness in act disconcerting.

Time changes all figures. The slender youth's frame
 Will grow portly some twenty years hence ;
 So a Verb, though it talks of *remaining* the same,
 Will alter its form with its tense.

In marks a *receptacle*, as when we say
 That 'Adelaide's hand is *in* Harry's.'
 There's nonsense *in* novels, and needles *in* hay,
 And dancing on Sunday *in* Paris.

To Verbs or to Adjectives Adverbs we place,
 To strengthen their force or diminish,
 As 'jockeys ride *slowly* on starting to race,
 But go *very fast* at the finish.'

The church was *most tastefully* decked by the girls,
 The curate intoned *quite divinely* ;
 Maud looked down, *coquettishly* shaking her curls,
 The chaperone slumbered *supinely*.

Conjunctions unite two clauses or names,
 That both may be thought of together :
 When summer is come, *then* you'll play outdoor games,
 And have a new hat *and* a feather.

To have (a full purse) or to be (an M.P.)
 Will give a new man good connections :
 Thus auxiliary Verbs, *to have* and *to be*,
 Make up for the lack of inflections.

Prepositions preceding judiciously mark
 The rôle that a Noun has to play ;
Instead marks a *substitute*—X gives his clerk
 Soft sawder *instead* of his *pay*.*

When we fight *for* priority, that is the *bone*
Of contention which sets us at strife ;
 If you live *upon* love, then we know love alone
 Must be the *support* of your life.

If her note's *from* a lover, that lover's the *source*
 Of Kate's happiness in its perusal.
 If she's told to say 'no' *by* papa, then of course
 Pa's the *cause* of that cruel refusal.

All juxtaposition by no means implies
 That the parties united agree.
 That woman's Tom's wife ; *but* he gives her black eyes,
Though she gives him a 'drop' in his tea.

Interjections—O my ! O good gracious ! O lawk !
 O crikey ! By Jove ! and By Jingo !—
 Leave to boys, washerwomen, and Yankees, who talk
 Through the nose, and call language 'a lingo.'

A lady of perfect good-breeding prefers
 Not to show what she feels in society ;
 If a circumstance sudden and startling occurs,
 She screams—a less breach of propriety.

ADDENDUM.

**This Accidence will be to all ladies' schools
 An invaluable acquisition ;
 An Appendix, with all the syntactical rules,
 Will be found in the second edition.**

* A captious critic might here object that 'soft sawder' is the substitute, and 'pay' the thing which it is made to represent ; but every clerk—'and he should be a learned man, a clerk,' as Chaucer says (*Prol. Canterbury Tales*)—every clerk will agree that in this case, as in any other, 'pay' would very properly be made the substitute for soft sawder.

TRADE-SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN BERLIN.

THOUGH England stands at the head of European communities that are working to better the education and social condition of women, though it was here that the impossibility of the continued retention of old restrictive customs unsuited to the present age was first felt and acknowledged, there is not another civilised country where a similar movement has not of late years taken place. And in the unity, good organisation, and practical common sense that have distinguished the working of these reform schemes abroad, we may with advantage take lessons from our foreign imitators—just as in mechanical inventions they have perfected what we originated. No better instance can perhaps be chosen than the German society in Berlin for the improvement of female industry known as the Lette-Verein, which claims more notice from those interested in the general question than it has yet received, both on account of the excellence of its objects and of the exceptional success that has attended its exertions. In no country had the reform to contend with greater obstacles than in Germany. Together with a curious moral latitude,—here falsely associated in many minds with the idea of feminine ‘emancipation,’ but which we there find going hand-in-hand with the most perfect subordination and intellectual narrowness,—there prevailed a rigid adherence to convention and conventional dependence, at least as deep-rooted in the minds of women as of men. Under such auspices, progress, of necessity,

was slow. Yet in Germany, as in England, there existed the same social feature, a vast number of women of the middle classes, daughters of clergymen, officers, Government officials, men in business, &c., as dependent as their brothers on their own exertions for support, but for whom no sort of corresponding advantages were offered in the way of adequate preparation, and openings and facilities generally, for the exigencies of working life. This conviction of the existence of a great and increasing social want, which it was high time should somehow be supplied, led, about ten years ago, to the foundation by some disinterested capable persons of an Institute, proposing as its object the promotion of the improvement of female industry, with all due regard for existing institutions; the extension of the trade activity of women, with intent to bring about more variety and thoroughness of culture, and thus to raise their status, both socially and industrially. It is the least that can be said of the Lette-Verein that its history will repay examination. The association is one, moreover, to which the most determined opponent of innovations here will scarcely refuse his sympathies. Its programme may be considered ‘advanced’ in Germany, but we may safely say there is not a single feature in the Institution which the most thorough-going English Conservative might not heartily approve; whilst from the skilful generalship and economy that have distinguished its manage-

ment, and to which it owes its unbroken prosperity, much may be learnt by fervent spirits in a land like this, where zeal and discretion seem hard to mate, and where so many beleaguered positions remain unwon, owing to the reckless waste of powder and shot by the advancing column. Some ten years ago, then, the work began modestly, by the taking of suitable premises, and the opening of technical classes for well-educated girls of sixteen and upwards, that should qualify them for superior industrial callings. This, which has developed into what we cannot be far wrong in calling the largest female trade-school in Europe, must be regarded as the main, central, and characteristic feature of the establishment, to which a number of minor useful institutions will be found united, and which has given birth to others, indebted for their success to the original support and protection of the parent society. The programme of the Lette-Verein now definitively expresses its professed aims and ends as follows: The higher culture of the female sex. Development of the industrial capacities of women who are self-dependent. Removal of existing prejudices and hindrances to female industry. The encouragement of educational establishments to train girls for commercial and industrial callings. Provision of means of information as to educational opportunities. Facilitation of the relations between employers and employed. Institution of special places for the exhibition and sale of women's work. Protection of working women generally, by affording information as to lodgings, &c., and by temporary help in case of need.

The actual condition of the Institute, as set forth in the last year's reports, speaks for itself.

We find a flourishing technical school with more than a thousand scholars. A boarding-house with accommodation for 47 inmates is attached, affording a home for pupils from the country, and a temporary *pied-à-terre* for lady students attending classes elsewhere, or governesses awaiting engagements. A cooking-school with 66 scholars. A printing-school with 32. A free reference office for employers and employed, which, in the year's course, found temporary or permanent engagements for 534 persons. A bazaar for the sale of work, which received 960 commissions. A fund for the issue of small loans, and another for the hiring-out of sewing-machines. Finally, the so-called 'Fortbildungsschule,' for girls of the artisan class, lately opened, with 300 in attendance already; and a laundry-school (what English lady's heart will not leap at the idea of good training for washerwomen!) with 72 learners. All these—not one of which, as will be seen presently, can properly be styled a charitable institution—work together in perfect combination, to their mutual advantage in every sense. They are all located in one building (with the exception of the printing-school) and under the management of one governing body. The general committee, consisting of ten ladies and ten gentlemen elected out of the society by its members, appoints separate sub-committees of duly qualified persons for the practical management of each of the separate special institutions under its charge.

The Technical School is virtually self-supporting. It is in three divisions, commercial, industrial, and drawing. The commercial section was attended by 45 pupils, who here receive a systematic course of instruction in all the

technicalities of business—book-keeping, commercial arithmetic, geography, and correspondence—German, French, and English. (It is worth noting here how the greater attention given to foreign languages in trade-education in Germany enables German male clerks to beat our own out of the field. There is no reason why, in this respect, our young women, at least, should remain behind the foreigner.) The fees are 7*l.* 10*s.* for the year's course. There is an upper and a lower or preparatory class; but no girl can be admitted, even to the junior class, who has not passed through the course of instruction at one of the German higher schools. The drawing-school, with 39 pupils, and fees of 7*l.* yearly, has classes for every branch of industrial art; freehand and linear drawing, colouring, ornamental design, flower-painting, china painting, and ornamental modelling. It is in two divisions, one of which is expressly for the training of drawing-teachers. The industrial section has separate classes for dress-making, sewing, machine-sewing, cutting out of linen, hair-dressing, artificial-flower making, and art needlework, with monthly fees varying up to 15*s.* There are over 900 scholars in attendance; the dressmaking-class alone being attended by 375. This division, clearly the most popular, is also vastly the most remunerative; and it is to the large excess of receipts over expenditure in the industrial department that the surplus in favour of the school, shown by the general balance, is due.

The Victoria Institute, or boarding-house belonging to the school, is under a salaried lady-superintendent, and afforded a home to 130 ladies in the course of the year. Except to pupils at the

Technical School, residence there is limited to three months at a time; the boarders pay 15*s.* weekly. There is a restaurant for ladies attached, at which from 70 to 80 dine daily, in addition to the inmates of the *pensionnat*. The cooking-school appended to this establishment works manifestly under peculiar advantages. The school for compositors has a sufficiency of employment guaranteed by a Berlin printing company; the advanced scholars earn from 25*s.* to 30*s.* a week, and are eventually drafted off into other establishments. They are all well-educated girls of the middle classes. This undertaking has worked very well, and the number of pupils is on the increase.

It did not enter into the original programme of the association to extend their ameliorating schemes so as to touch the class of artisans, or of domestic servants. But when years of success had established the original institution on its present solid and permanent basis, it was judged desirable to set on foot an additional plan for the benefit of the lower classes. This Fortbildungsschule is largely attended by factory-hands, servants, shop-girls, and others, of ages from 14 to 24. It has classes for the usual branches of elementary learning, industrial drawing, singing, and hygiene. The connection of this 'working women's college' with the superior educational establishment for a superior class of persons is said to have had a very good effect on the girls in the former; inspiring them with a better idea of the dignity of work, and stimulating them to greater zeal and application.

So much, then, for results. The question follows, how have they been attained? And in such enterprises the first question must

usually be the question of expense. In matters economical, it must be confessed, they manage these things better in Germany. The Lette-Verein aims at being self-supporting. Many of its special undertakings have become so already. But it is obvious that such a scheme could not be started or successfully carried through its early stages without substantial aid from those interested in its objects. The Lette-Verein is unsupported by Government grant. But many of the leading spirits of Berlin, convinced of the usefulness of the association, and the excellent principles on which it is conducted, have not been chary of their patronage. Foremost among these has been the Crown Princess, who, from the very outset, has tendered a personal interest and direct assistance, that have contributed materially to its prosperity. And to the President, Frau Schepeler-Lette, who gives the benefit of her disinterested labours and watchful care, and has long been, so to speak, the guardian spirit of the association to whose welfare she devotes herself, it owes an unrequitable debt. Since the institution has thoroughly established its claim to recognition, it has received support and encouragement of a substantial kind from various quarters, such as bequests for the endowment of free admissions to the technical school and to the *pensionnat*. The Government, moreover, has lately entrusted to it the training of drawing-mistresses for the national elementary schools. Those who wish to enrol themselves as members of the society pay a small fee, of which the minimum is 3s. yearly. Its plan of enterprise has been on the experimental method; not launching out into hazardous speculations, and set-

ting expensive machinery in motion, on the chance of charity coming to its aid in case of need. Its action has been determined by the resources actually at command. If it is now in a position to put forth branches in many directions, it is because of its careful planting in the first instance. It is no bough stuck in the ground artificially—with a deceptive superficial bloom, yet without the elements of endurance—but a well-rooted tree, living, growing, and giving life.

It would seem almost superfluous to dwell on the additional strength and importance that have accrued to the association, from the fact that a number of special institutions, whose main object is similar, are here amalgamated. It is the old story of the strong faggot and weak separate sticks. Many humbler useful works have thriven through their union with this centre, that might otherwise have languished and died, or remained insignificant. Coöperation saves small undertakings from bankruptcy; a vast deal more good is accomplished at a less outlay. The additional non-pecuniary but equally valuable advantages secured by working thus in concert must not be overlooked. The great convenience, increased liveliness and variety, extension of opportunities, the connecting-links between feminine workers and their employers, thus supplied, are not among the least excellent characteristics of the institution. Such combination may not everywhere be possible. The Lette-Verein had to deal with a field entirely unoccupied, and was, therefore, the more easily enabled to realise the idea of a number of undertakings, closely united in principle, united also in practice.

LONDON STREET ENTERTAINMENTS.

AN acquaintance of mine, who for more than an ordinary lifetime has conducted a pawnbroking establishment in one of the densely-populated working-class districts in or about the metropolis, makes it his boast that a glance at his daily ledger will at any time reveal the exact condition of the labour market, and the present condition and immediate prospects of the labouring community. It depends, of course, on the quality and quantity of the goods deposited with him as security for money advanced; but it is rather a deep insight into the ways of working people that enables my friend to put faith in his indicator. The temporary mortgaging of Sunday raiment he regards as having little or no bearing on the question; nor does he attach much importance to spasmodic influxes of superfluities and articles of adornment, such as brooches and earrings, or even watches. Rings of the 'keeper' kind, and those that are supposed to denote 'engagement,' he is accustomed to look on as merely convenient little factors in raising the wind for pleasure or business, though when it comes to the point of pawning the wedding-ring (and my friend keeps a stock of excellent gilt imitations, at the small sum of threepence each, that may be worn as a substitute), he admits that matters are beginning to look serious; but the line he takes his stand on is represented by the house-clock. Says my friend, 'When it comes to parting with the clock, be it eight-day or mantelshelf or com-

mon Dutchman, I at once ask my young man, "How are we off for store room for tools? They are sure to come in now." In dribblets at first, perhaps, and those that may at a pinch be least needed, but we are bound to get them. The tools follow the clock, in a manner of speaking, just as mourners at a funeral follow the departed; and it is just as certain that, at the first glimmer of returning prosperity, the clock will be redeemed before the feather-bed or even the parlour-carpet.' Feeling, at this commencement of winter time, curious to ascertain the verdict of Mr. Pawnbroker's poor-man's-means meter, I was on my way home after hearing a not very encouraging account, and was pondering on the amount of reliance that might be placed in the prognostics of the Lombardian prophet, when by chance I met the master of an East-London workhouse.

'And how do you find matters at your establishment, sir?' I ventured to ask him.

He shook his head dubiously.

'My good friend,' he made answer, 'our prospects are not promising. There are certain signs that with us are infallible, whatever others may fail.'

My thoughts instantly reverted to the pawnbroker. Here was another individual, who from his calling should be reckoned amongst the most hard-headed and practical, owing to a superstitious belief in signs and tokens.

'I can tell pretty well the state of the working-man's pocket,' con-

tinued the parochial authority, 'when he begins to neglect those who depend on him for making a living. I allude, sir, to street performers. I really believe we might give a very decent entertainment to our old people, if it was the time for their annual treat, without hiring a single professional from outside. We have at present in the house two families of acrobats, a sword-swallower, the fellow that eats burning tow with a fork, the black man who throws the half-hundred weight, and I am not sure if it is three or four street niggers.'

'But,' I remarked, 'since they can't obtain a living by their street entertainments, why don't they turn their hands to something else?'

'Well, you see,' replied the workhouse master, 'I suppose it is because there is nothing else they know how to turn their hands to that they took up their peculiar line of business at first; and when that fails them—and it always does when times grow hard and working people have no longer pennies to spare—there is no other refuge for them but the workhouse.'

'But they pick up plenty of money in summer time, and when trade is brisk.'

'It is always precarious,' returned my informant; 'wretchedly little as a whole, and at best bare enough to enable them to live from hand to mouth. I have talked with them on the subject, and they have told me the street public, as well as the shopkeeping class, are generous when they can afford it, but they are injudicious. There is at the present time in our infirmary a cornopean-player, and a very clever one, I am told. He didn't start as a beggar. Quite a swell, I believe; he was of good family, but squandered his means at gambling and horse-racing. He lost his last remainder

of money, so he says, at Ascot—every penny, and owed plenty besides, and was ruined. He went to the race on a drag; and the party had taken a cornopean-player with them, a poor kind of man, who liked to tell any one who would listen his misfortunes, and on the way he found opportunity to make known his difficulties to the other—to my man, I will call him. My man, being a generous fellow, gave him a sovereign, making sure, as they all do, that he should have a pocketful and to spare presently. Well, he didn't have; he lost, and was ruined, as I have told you; and months afterwards, so he tells the tale, being in rags and hungry, the cornopean-player of the drag, to whom he had given the sovereign, met him by chance, and took him home and lodged and fed him, and finally taught him how to play, and bought him a second-hand instrument, and so started him. But it only postponed his going to the bad for a year or two. The only chance a street cornopean-player has, as I am told, is to play outside public-houses; and that is what *my* player did for nearly a year and a half. But a man cannot subsist entirely on beer, and it is in that form that the publican almost invariably rewards this class of musician. It was almost all that the poor fellow got in the way of nourishment—beer for breakfast, tea, and supper; and the consequence is that he is now in our infirmary, and there, no doubt, will be an end of him.'

'I suppose,' I remarked, 'that at one time or other you have given shelter to almost every kind of itinerant amuser of the people?'

'I think I may say all, without exception,' he replied, after a little consideration; 'all of the show-man kind, at any rate.'

‘Including Punch-and-Judy men, of course?’ said I.

My friend reflected for fully half a minute ere he answered.

‘Well, really I think I must say excluding Punch. It never occurred to me before; but now you recall it to my mind, I am quite sure that all the years I have filled the office of master I never once entered a Punch-and-Judy man on the parish books. Which I take to be a very remarkable circumstance,’ he continued pleasantly, ‘when one bears in mind that any time during the last quarter of a century Punch has been supposed to be on his last legs.’

It was, perhaps, not very surprising after this conversation with the worthy workhouse master, that my thoughts should take a vagabond turn and wander amongst the fraternity of street exhibitions and amusing performances past and present. It was not a cheerful theme, viewed by the light my friend had thrown on it; but I must say I derived considerable comfort from the assurance that Mr. Punch was yet able to weather the storm, and munch between his nut-cracker nose and chin the bread of independence. The very Bagstock of public entertainers, ‘rough and tough old Joe, sir,’ Punch is still hale and hearty, and as competent to draw ‘full houses’ as he was a generation since, when people began to predict his decline and fall. It was said that it was only in the ordinary course of things that the hero, who had so repeatedly ‘laid’ the ghost of Judy, must soon himself retire to the land of invisibles. The march of intellect and advancing enlightenment amongst our juvenile population would not tolerate the barbarous old wooden head blocking the way. He might,

perhaps, have managed to drag out a failing existence a few years longer, had ignorance been permitted still to rule rampant amongst the lower classes; but the inauguration of the Board School had effectually done the humpbacked old tyrant’s business—snuffed him out, sir, as effectually as gas snuffed out the reign of the dim old tallow ‘dip.’ Under the new order of affairs, when education had opened the eyes of even the street urchins, and taught them to distinguish between vulgarity and politeness, they would tingle with shame to think there was once a time when the coarse and brutal exhibition of Punch and Judy won their admiration, and conjured the pennies out of their pockets almost before they were aware of it. Having planted their third and fourth standards on the heights of Parnassus, they would look down with disdain on the paltry little theatre with the painted puppets; and that one-time wonderful dog Toby being now sunk even below their contempt, they would be willing, not only to give the sagacious creature a bad name, but to hang him into the bargain.

Such, as regards Mr. Punch, were the forecasts of the future; and if ever the goggle-eyed breaker of beadles, heads, and intrepid turner of the table even on Jack Ketch himself, gives vent to a genuine chuckle, it must be when it crosses his mind how curiously the knowing ones were out in their reckoning. True, there was a time, some ten or twelve years ago, when there was spread about what seemed to be a well-founded rumour, that Punch was prohibited, and had quietly accepted his fate and shut up shop and retired to oblivion. Certain it was that he had disappeared from the streets, that even in his most

familiar haunts his cheery 'roo-ti-too-i' was heard no more. People wondered what could have occasioned the sudden suppression. Was it on account of an order issued by the Lord Chamberlain? That could scarcely be, because, unscrupulous old rascal as Punch is as regards almost every other social institution, he was never known to overstep the bounds of propriety as regards the habiliments of his female characters. No lady's gown could be of more modest proportions than Judy's, and even her ghost was draped in the amplest of bedgowns. No one could fathom the secret, when, just as the ancient hero of the baton was about to be relegated to the list of 'mysterious disappearances,' lo, and behold, the matter was cleared up. An artful and enterprising speculator, judging that amongst the kindest recollections of the old country, in the hearts of those who had emigrated therefrom, Punch and Judy would occupy no mean position, had induced all the Punch men that were procurable to pack up their theatres and their drums and Pandean pipes, and taking with them their Tobys (this last was a principal clause in the agreement, Tobys of the genuine breed not being procurable out of England), sign for a twelvemonth's engagement to perform in the streets of the United States of America. Whether the adventurers, finding their circumstances much improved, never came back again, and those seen about now are their friends and relatives who have succeeded them, is not certain. Anyhow, everybody—including, it may be safely wagered, all Board-School pupils under twelve, 'standard' or no standard—was mightily glad to welcome Punch again when he reappeared. Perhaps it was a good thing for the

old gentleman in more ways than one that the happy thought occurred to that Yankee speculator. It has given to Mr. Punch a more independent position. He is no longer to be treated as a doddering old imbecile, to be recognised with a shamefaced nod of encouragement, and 'patronised' as a pauper kept out of the workhouse in mere compassion. If you are tired of him, say the word: America will receive him with open arms; Australia would turn out and make holiday in honour of his arrival; and there is money to be made in New Zealand, where an exhibition such as Punch and Judy could not fail to astonish the natives.

There are street performers, at least as old as Punch, who have been less fortunate in retaining a hold on the affections of the public. There is the 'peepshow-man' of the days of one's youth. Quite as familiar as the little theatre with its four slender wooden legs and its green-baize petticoat was the individual who carried his panoramic box on his back, and the trestles to stand it on in his hand, and who was sure of an audience, albeit not always a paying one, within two minutes of his making a 'pitch.' It was a marvellously cheap entertainment at a half-penny, and it had the advantage of combining instruction with amusement, though perhaps it was not always rigorously accurate as regards historical detail. There may, however, be a reason for the peepshow-man's decadence. At the time he was flourishing, panoramas on a gigantic and splendid scale were not much in vogue. When they came to be, the minor affair, with its half a dozen yards of painted calico and its penny-sized spyglasses, that would become blurred the moment one began to breathe quickly with excitement, had no chance against

it. The showman, poor old fellow, held out bravely, and seemed exceedingly loth to acknowledge that his occupation was gone. Had he yielded earlier, it would perhaps have been better for his dignity. The last one I remember seeing was in a back street in Camden Town, and, ready-money failing him, he was fain to attempt to do business in kind. 'Bring out your rags, bring out your bones or your old bottles!' he cried aloud. And they brought out the articles named; and when I saw him, with a shrewd judgment for what it might bring him, balancing a bone in his hand, and then insisting that the child should fetch another bone, or at least a doctor's bottle, before he could permit her to take a turn at the spyglasses, I sincerely hoped that, once it had come to this, he would soon see the propriety of shutting up shop altogether; and I suppose he did so, since in all my perambulations I never set eyes on him since.

There is the 'gallanty show' again. Who can give a satisfactory reason why Punch's theatre should still hold its own, while its exact counterpart—except that the 'gallanty' was an evening and illuminated exhibition, and the audience, instead of the substantial puppets, saw only their shadows cast on a sheet—has almost, if not entirely, disappeared? Without prejudice, the gallanty was far more entertaining than Punch; and if the two were weighed in the scales of morality, there can be no question as to which would kick the beam. Goodness forbid that the rising generation should go Punchless, but really there is much that is reprehensible in the conduct of Toby's master! He is a shameful old wife-beater, and he never makes a joke that is not emphasised with a murderous blow

of his too-ready bludgeon. Whereas the gallanty show dealt in only innocent domestic drama and farce. A Quaker's children might without contamination witness the spirited play of the broken bridge, or the eccentricities of Mr. Jobson, the inebriated shoemaker. But the gallanty has gone. To be sure it always had its disadvantage from a financial point of view—that is to say, the performance being capable of taking place at dark was against the proprietors. It is notorious, and an ever-rankling thorn in the side of Punch-and-Judy men, that in the broad daylight there are even grown people who are so mean as to stand and witness the performance right up to the part where Mr. Ketch comes in, and then sneak off the moment there are symptoms of the hat coming round; and if folk will behave thus shabbily in the open face of day, is it likely they will do otherwise with the cloak of evening to screen them from detection? It is not pleasant to be driven in this way to account for the despairing retirement of a once popular exhibition. It does not indicate an improved moral tone amongst the people. The gallanty showman, despite the drawback hinted, could make a living in a bygone generation, why cannot he do so in the present? It is useless to 'pause for a reply,' because the only persons who can answer it, according to their wont, are off and round the corner the moment they are called on.

The longer one reflects on the subject, the more certain it appears that the race of speculators willing to devote themselves to street entertainments depending on voluntary contributions for their remuneration, is dwindling. Whether as an institution it has gained in quality what it may have lost

in quantity, is another matter. In some respects the advantage is decidedly on the side of modern time. As regards street music, for example, it is not half a century since that the only itinerant purveyors of sweet harmonies were the fiddler (who was generally blind and almost invariably intoxicated), the bagpipes, that even more execrable instrument of torture the hurdy-gurdy, and the hautboy. It may be the opinion of some people that, once a taste for music has been cultivated amongst the commonalty, the most prominent outcrop is the barrel-organ and the persecuting ogre who turns its handle. It would have been better for the peace of mind and the nerves and temper of the nation if we had never advanced beyond the blind-fiddler period. It must be acknowledged, however, that the last few years have seen a vast improvement in the street organ; while as regards other musical instruments there are many street 'bands' whose performances will satisfy all but the most fastidious. Having, then, made satisfactory progress in this important direction, it should follow—if there is virtue in the quotation, 'Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast'—that brutalising street exhibitions prove no longer attractive. Undoubtedly there are some of the old sort that would not now be tolerated. As, for example, in these days, when we can boast of a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, it would be quite useless for any ruffian to attempt to revive the once popular back-street spectacle, of balancing a young donkey with its feet tied together on the top of a short ladder, the resting place of which was the performer's chin. We have grown too refined, perhaps, even in our 'back settlements,' to regard with

admiration and liberal intent the sight of a miserable mangy old bear made to 'dance' by having his toes rapped with a stick, being kept the while reared on its hind-legs by the ungentle persuasion of tugging at an iron ring passed through the gristle of its nose.

Such gross barbarities are no longer in favour even amongst the very lowest classes, but there is room for further improvement still. As witness the performer who, for many years now, has been exhibiting in the streets of London, the tools of his craft being a bag of large-sized raw potatoes. The man is beyond middle age, and his head is bald, or nearly so; and all over his cranium, from the forehead to the base of his skull, are bumps unknown to the phrenologist. There are blue bumps, and bumps of a faded greenish hue, and bumps red and inflamed, and his bald scone looks as though it had been out in a rain of spent bullets. It is not so, however; it has only been exposed to a downpour of raw potatoes. He is well known, and as soon as he puts his bag down, and divests himself of his coat, is quickly surrounded by a ring of spectators. 'Here I am again,' he says, with a grin, as he takes off his cap and exposes his mottled skull; 'here is the old man once more, and he's not dead yet. You'll see a treat to-day, for my taters are bigger than ever they were before, and, what's more, they're "Yorkshire reds," the hardest tater that grows. I shall do it once too often, there's no mistake about that; but I've served the public faithful for five years and more, and I ain't going to funk over it now. Here you are: here's a tater that weighs half a pound if it weighs an ounce. Chuck threepence in the ring, and up it goes.' And threepence is

'chucked' into the ring, and up it does go—high above the houses; and the man with the mottled head folds his arms like Ajax defying the lightning, and gazes skywards, prepared for the descending missile; and presently it strikes him with a sounding thud, and is smashed into a dozen pieces with the concussion, and bespatters his visage with the pulp. 'Now chuck fourpence in,' says the exhibitor, wiping his eyes, 'and we'll see what we can do with a tater just as large again.' I don't know whether, on compulsion, I would rather witness the pretty sight, or stand by and see another modern street performer making a fiery meal of strands of blazing tarred rope, daintily picked from a torch with a three-pronged fork; or that other stirring spectacle of the man who lies on the flat of his back, while another places large stones on the prostrate one's chest, and cracks them with a sledge-hammer.

It is a subject for curious reflection, what is the private life of individuals of that class last alluded to? They of course have private lives, or it would not be worth while to endure the risks and inconveniences that pertain to their public existence. Take the potato-thrower. Has he a wife and children at home waiting for him in the evening? Has the partner of his joys and sorrows always ready, by the time her husband returns, some nice comforting fomentation for his bruised head? And does he take his evening pipe and listen to the prattle of his little ones with his unlucky head bandaged in a poultice? Can he bear, after the many terrific smashes the cruel vegetable has dealt him in the course of the day, to sit down to a dish of potatoes for his supper? And does his wife, the meal concluded, count up the pence he

has had 'chucked' into the ring? And does she—*can* she—is it in human nature that she can then take the bag and go to market to replenish it with Yorkshire reds, 'the hardest tater that grows'?

There is another branch of street entertainments that has fallen off of late years, that which includes the performances of animals. The hare and tabor have too long ago vanished to be more than merely alluded to; but until twenty years back, say, performing dogs were a common feature of our highways and byways. Indeed, they are so rarely seen now that it may be worth while to make mention of almost the last remaining of the tribe. The animal in question accompanies a dancing Scotchman, whose silvery locks, no less than his weather-beaten visage and his battered-looking old bonnet, proclaim him a veteran in the army of peripatetic performers. His brogues are trodden down at heel, the tartan of his hose is marred in countless places with the healing efforts of the darning-needle, his scarlet regimental coat—for he pretends to military origin—has holes at the elbows, and its gaping buttonholes are eked out with scraps of twine; but he possesses a spirit that soars above such trifling deficiencies. He makes no appeal to public compassion; he claims encouragement and support on his merits as a performer on the bagpipes and a dancer to his own music; and in the latter capacity he acquits himself with an amount of spirit and energy that, in muddy weather, bespatters him to his very eyebrows. He is an ardent believer in the stimulative qualities of whisky, as is attested by his bloodshot eyes and the emulative hue of his nasal organ, which seems to mellow towards evening, as fruits ripen in

the autumn time. But though the spectator does not feel called upon to commiserate the man, it is hard to withhold a full measure of pity from the unlucky dog, who is the constant companion of the Scotchman's musical perambulations. It is an intelligent animal of the poodle breed, with its hinder parts clean shaven, and with nothing left it of the distinguishing shagginess of its tribe but a kind of mock mane, a bedraggled tuft to its tail, and an inch or two of slovenly raggedness about its unfortunate toes. Unfortunate in more than a manner of speaking, since the drunken old bagpiper, in his wild capering, not being as accurate as he might be in his steps, frequently treads on them, when his poor, patient, four-footed companion makes a lame attempt to respond to the inspiring strains of the pipes, as, raised on its hind-legs, it faces its master. If ever there was an instance of unselfish devotion, it is manifested by that wretched poodle. In private life, and when the weary pair have limped home late at night, they may possibly partake of the same supper and share the same bed; but in public the poor beast has a miserable time of it. It wears a kilt and a Scotch bonnet, and in the excitement of a strathspey the latter will shake down over one eye or both; but let it stop only for a moment to regain its obstructed vision, and the fierce Scotchman, without pausing in the tune, will send such a blast through the pipes as to cause the afflicted animal to leap a foot from the ground; and it keeps on capering blindfold, thereby doubling

the danger of getting it to be trodden on. Sometimes when it does not move quick enough the Scotchman will, by the vigorous application of the toe of his shoe, cause it to accomplish a perfect somersault; but it alights on its hind-legs without resentment, and mends its paces with meek obedience in its eyes. One could almost wish rather that it made for a vengeful mouthful out of the old rascal's bare calf, and then ran for it. But where could it run to? An unencumbered dog might do so, and with some chance of finding a home and honest employment in a distant part of the country; but a dog in a plaid petticoat! The hateful bonnet it might get rid of, but not the tightly-tied-on emblem of its make-believe nationality. Wherever it went it would be as surely recognised as an escaping convict, whose nether limbs are incased, the one in black and the other in canary colour, and captured ignominiously and returned to its tyrant master. Does that sagacious poodle in his scant hours of leisure reflect on the hardships of its existence? Does it lay awake of nights, when the whiskified old bagpiper is snoring, licking its abraded toes, and sorrowfully recalling the days of happy puppyhood? It looks quite capable of doing so. It looks capable of so much that when it comes round with the leather saucer in its mouth, one bestows a copper on the dog, not on the man. Its beseeching eyes seem to say, 'Do, please! If we have a good day there will be enough for his whisky, and perhaps a penny over to buy meat for me.'

MY LADY.

WHAT shall I say in praise of eyes
That once have looked my heart away ;
Where light of happy laughter lies,
And shadows gleam from grave to gay,
Like love at play ?

What shall I say of dusky tress,
Soft-gathered from a brow of snow,
And warmed by sunlight's chance caress
To golden shades of brighter glow
That come and go ?

What shall I say of curved lips red
As some rich blossom sweet and rare ;
So softly grave when smiles are fled,
So rich in mirth when smiles are there,
My lady fair ?

I stand where fields are gold and green,
A fire of flowers before my eyes ;
The blue stream's ripples flow between
The far-off gleam of bluer skies,
That softly rise.

And as I stand once more I dream,
And so my eyes forget to weep ;
And heart to heart once more we seem,
As though love wakened from long sleep,
Dark, dim, and deep.

I praise your beauty as I praised
In far-off hours of some sweet day
(That held your eyes to mine upraised) ;
I vow love once is love alway,
Nor e'er can stray.

Alas, that in the years gone by
Such days have gone to come no more !
I stand beneath a darker sky,
And on your beauty set no store,
Nor shall do more.

Yet you are fair, your eyes are bright
As when they answered back to mine ;
But things once wrong are hard to right,
And faithless love can ne'er entwine
My heart with thine !

RITA.

THE CURIOUS HISTORY OF SOME MISDIRECTED LETTERS.

CHAPTER I.

THE COTTAGE FLOWER-SHOW.

It was the close of an exquisite day in the early autumn, and I was wandering in a vast park-like meadow on the outskirts of a little old-fashioned town in one of our most rural counties. It is a locality hardly mentioned by guide-books, and unvisited by tourists; and yet in the broad expanse of meadowland, through which flows a sluggish stream, with fatter trout than belong to Wales and the Highlands; in the quiet country lanes, where the interlacing boughs often form a natural cloister; in the large opulent farms and homesteads; in the noble range of downs that southwards closed the prospect,—there always seemed to me a transcript of a perfectly idyllic English life, which poet and painter and the student of manners might lovingly and lingeringly contemplate.

The little town was far secluded from railways; and the railways which have brought so many second-rate places into notice have deepened the obscurity in which those village towns rest that are isolated from those slender rails and wires which have revolutionised the globe. Still Bullingford had its points of vantage. It had its good and cheap grammar-school, suited to the scions of genteel poverty. Then it had a kind of connection with those august institutions, the two Houses of Parliament. One of the many seats of a great earl was close at

hand—a big modern edifice, but designated, from some old ruins found in the grounds, as the Castle. Moreover, one of the county members, in whose domain I was wandering, had a small shooting-lodge here, with a stud-farm attached. This had been a high day for Bullingford, to be marked by the white stone or by the red letter.

It had been a grand show-day—a show of fruits, flowers, and vegetables—for the six rural parishes, of which Bullingford formed a kind of metropolitan centre. The show was really a grand show, which would claim its columns in the local newspapers, and even its paragraphs in the London press. The Earl and the member had both subscribed largely, and had made little speeches in the luncheon-tent, both of which had been taken down by the reporters—every word. The beauty and fashion of the six parishes had gathered largely; and where will you find six parishes in merrie England which will not yield a large quota of both? I was given to understand that there had been such a display of hothouse plants, grapes, and cut flowers from the gardens and conservatories of beauty and fashion, that Bullingford had never known the like. The Bullingford band, too, consisting of the best performers not only of Bullingford, but of its adjacent dependent parishes, had fairly surpassed itself. The prizes had been liberal, and so numerous that very few deserving competi-

tors had been altogether disappointed. There was not a whisper at that happy date to be heard about agricultural depression, and the jovial reign of the great Pan seemed to be revived in the radiant landscape.

Thus much I was given to understand. I myself had arrived a day too late for the fair, so to speak. So ignorant was I of the illustrious renown of Bullingford, that, having come to the place late in the afternoon, I was taking my evening stroll quite unconscious of the high junketings and performances of the festal day. The heavy carts, loaded with competing produce, had departed; the light wheels of carriages and heavy wheels of carts had rolled away. The gentry had paid their half-crown at noon, and now the commonalty poured in at sixpence a head. I came in so late that the cheque-taker, in a very rare fit of public generosity, declined to take my sixpence. It was all over, or would be all over in less than no time. And yet I should certainly have considered that I had had my money's worth. For though much had been taken away from the show, much still remained. There were some lovely little rustic beauties of children, with their heaps of wild flowers, nosegays for competition. Heaps, too, of piled-up vegetables and fruits, and multitudinous specimens of that window gardening which it is now so much the fashion to encourage in lowly homes. The whole gracious scenery of the landscape seemed an embodied poetry. The evening scarlet lights were splintered on bough and leaf; the evening shadows threw forward their soft shields. The serious business of the show being over, the amiable Bullingfordians surrendered themselves to the charms of the sweet autumnal evening.

Allowing for the difference of latitude, it was like a vintage-gathering of the sunny South. Despite the falling dew in one part of the meadow, there was genuine dance. In another part many of the rustics were disporting themselves at kiss-in-the-ring, whereby their tender minds had been all too early trained in the mysteries of osculation.

The meadow, as I have mentioned, was well timbered, and at one end there was a wide natural avenue. I had withdrawn from the busy groups to the avenue for seclusion, and to chew the cud of fancy; being given, like Isaac of old, to walk forth in the fields at eventide and meditate. Suddenly there passed in front of me, emerging from the trees on my right hand, a young couple, with whose appearance I was much struck. When I say a young couple, I ought more properly to have limited the term to the young lady, who would be barely twenty, while the man's age would be nearly double. Every woman is naturally a lady in my humble opinion, although it is hardly true that every man is naturally a gentleman. In the narrow critical sense, she was not a young lady in the way in which we speak of girls in society being ladies. Still, there could be no question about the brightness of her eyes, the exquisite colour of her complexion, the elegance of her form. Her companion's arm was carelessly thrown around her, and in her confiding attitude and rapt attention it was easy to decipher the old, old story of love and trust. The man was dressed as a gentleman, but he failed to impress one as a gentleman. He was well and even gorgeously dressed in a handsome suit of velvet, which set off to advantage his fine person and sunburnt

foreign face. He was speaking in a low voice, and with an earnest impassioned utterance. Only a few muttered words came within earshot, but they were words which were evidently full of power and effect for the agitated girl by his side. At the head of the avenue there was a big handsome black horse held in charge by a page-looking youth. Despite the outward show about the man, he was only a half-bred; and if ever a man had *roué* stamped on his face and manners, this fellow had. When he came to the gate at the end of the avenue, the usual adieu followed, and, vaulting not ungracefully into the saddle, he waved his adieux, followed by devouring eyes. She watched him for a time, and then turning away somewhat abruptly, we happened to come face to face. With a slight gesture of impatience, she rapidly glided off to the left, and proceeded to join one of the festive groups that were still making holiday beneath the spreading beech-trees. I thought at first that the gesture of disdain was intended for my own special behoof, as a reward for my near-sighted stare. There came, however, within eye-shot, in the same line as myself, a young man, who took off his hat to the retreating maiden, which only elicited an acknowledgment that was more like a snub than a courtesy.

It was not very easy to tell what this young man's station in life might be, for every one looks so fine in a holiday-gala like this that it is not easy to realise what the ordinary appearance in everyday clothes may be. But this young man had a frank bright face, with a sweetness of eyes and breadth of forehead which contrasted very pleasantly with that of the horseman to whom I had taken an instinctive dislike. Never-

theless, an expression of anger and chagrin passed over his face as he noted the retreating cavalier, and angrily shook his fist after him.

I always feel conversationally disposed towards my fellow-kind, and saw instinctively that this young man, despite his angry mood, would be ready to foregather with me; so I said,

'You don't seem to have very cordial feelings towards the man who is riding away so fast.'

'I should like to have him on the grass here, and give him a jolly good hiding. What does he mean by coming here and interfering between me and my girl?'

'O, she's your girl, is she?' I retorted. 'I should hardly have thought it by what I witnessed just now. She didn't take to you very kindly when you raised your hat to her. My own idea was that she was the other man's girl.'

'She might have promised to be my wife by this time, if this infernal foreigner had not come interfering with his airs and graces. Louisa and I were coming to a good understanding; but since she has taken to walking with him, we are nearly cuts. And I expect that he wants her bit of money.'

'She is an heiress as well as a beauty, then?'

'I had a deal rather have the girl without the money than fifty times the money without the girl. I expect that it's all the other way with him, though he does make himself such a big chap.'

'Do you know who he is?'

'He's staying at the Castle, at Lord Bullingford's; that's all I know. He might be a lord himself, by the way in which he gallops about on that big horse of his. But I don't think him a lord, and I am sure he's not a gentleman.'

Now it so happened that I

myself was a guest at the Castle. Certainly I myself was not a lord or lordling. I was a barrister, a briefless barrister; but some time back I had done something—let the reader suppose that it was the writing of a poem or the painting of a picture—which had furthered my social status and almost ruined my professional prospects. It was a common thing for me now to be visiting county families when it would be much more to my interest to be staying at the houses of country attorneys, more especially as I may candidly say that I was wanting very much to get married, but had not sufficient means to carry out the idea.

I returned to the Castle, quite in the dark, about three-quarters of an hour before dinner. I had just time to exchange a few words with my kind hostess, and then dressed. The Earl was chiefly known as the husband of the Countess. We got on very pleasantly. I remember I sat next the clergyman of the parish, an old man and a widower, whose children were all grown up and scattered about the world. He told me that he almost found a second home at the Castle when the Squire and his wife were at home. I looked, but, as I had more than expected, I looked in vain, for the big foreigner. Thinking that as the Vicar was so domesticated at the place he would be sure to know everything, I asked him if he knew anything of a tall Italian-looking man, very well dressed, riding a black horse, and attached to the Castle in some sort of way. The Vicar, after a good deal of rumination, said that though he certainly ought to know every one in his parish, in this case he was at fault, and referred the matter to the Countess.

‘I cannot tell who it can be,’ said Lady Bullingford, ‘unless it

should be the foreign *chef* whom I brought down for the shooting-season. He is supposed to be a French cook—all cooks, you know, are French, just as all singers are Italian.’

‘But this man can hardly be a cook, my lady. He was well dressed and well mounted.’

‘My dear Mr. Marjoribanks, and why shouldn’t he be? I tell Lord Bullingford that it is something awful what we pay him. You mustn’t suppose that he touches anything with his own hands, unless as the greatest favour and under extraordinary circumstances. Since he left the house of an ambassador at Paris he has declined to take any permanent engagement, and indeed we could not afford to have him ourselves as a regular thing; but he will take a job for the season, or will come to a country house for a short time in the recess.’

‘It is no wonder that I did not know him. I expect that he never comes to church,’ said the Vicar.

‘I am afraid not,’ said the Countess; ‘and, indeed, his last mistress warned me that his moral conduct was not good, and the housekeeper has everything in the house in strict surveillance.’

‘I am afraid that they will hardly be able to keep him in order when he is out of the house,’ said the Vicar.

This was a matter on which I might myself have shed some light. But just then the stream of conversation took another direction, and the subject passed off. I have often wished that the case had been otherwise. If I had uttered warning words a remarkable and mysterious history, not without tragic elements, might never have come to pass.

CHAPTER II.

TWO LETTERS.

A YEAR after, there came a certain morning when I sat leisurely at breakfast in my chambers in the Temple. The breakfast was a good one; my breakfasts are always good. To eat a good breakfast is to lay a solid foundation of good works for the rest of the day. My letters are neatly laid on the table in front of the fire, and the *Times*, and also the book or review or magazine which I may happen to have in reading. The letters of course have the prior claim. Then I read the *Times*, and it is only in case I can dispose of the *Times* that I proceed to the book. As a copy of the *Times* is equivalent to a moderate-sized volume, it is only occasionally that I can get beyond it. Indeed, so tremendous is the demand which the *Times* makes upon my limited power of reading, that I have come to the resolution that I will lay it down as soon as I have finished my breakfast, and only take it up at odd times afterwards. One result of which moral resolution is that breakfast becomes a highly elongated meal.

I have read my letters, some seven or eight of them. There is the letter from the obliging money-lender who is willing to accommodate me on the most reasonable terms. There are two or three from wine-merchants, one or two begging-letters, a dinner-card, a card for a conversazione, a delicious perfumed epistle from my little cousin Fanny, a letter from my dear old schoolfellow Jones, out in the Punjab, overflowing with wit and wisdom and descriptive power such as might make the fortune of a special correspondent. And then come the two following epistles—they are

here given in the order they were opened by me—which I read open-mouthed, with amazement and consternation.

The first came from the actuary of an insurance office—by Jove, my own insurance office!—dated the day before from Gresham Chambers:

‘Sir,—We beg to acknowledge the receipt of your communication conveying the information of the death of your wife Louise, and the accompanying documents, with your claim for one thousand pounds.’

I had read so far when I nearly lost my breath. ‘My wife Louise!’ I ejaculated. ‘The only wife I ever intend to have is my little cousin Fanny, and what in the world would she say if she ever heard that I had another wife called Louise?’

However, I resumed the official epistle from the insurance company:

‘As we have no knowledge of the medical men who sign the papers, we shall be obliged if you would send us a document verifying their names and position from the English consul at Milan.—Your obedient servant,

‘JAMES FORTESCUE, *Actuary.*’

This was really very queer. But a minute or two’s cogitation was sufficient to clear up the mystery. It was evidently the case of a misdirected letter. I was a customer of this very insurance office. Fanny’s papa had insisted that I should insure my life, as a preliminary step to any further matrimonial negotiations. Evidently the letter had got into a wrong envelope.

The next letter which I took up was one of the most horrifying communications which I had ever received in my life:

‘Don’t be such an infernal fool.

Why you talk of coming to England? I kill you if you come. You are no wife of mine. My own wife will tear your hair and eyes out if you come. Suppose you come to England. Then I am put in prison because I marry you. I not like that. I will kill you before you put me in prison. Then you will be base bad woman yourself because you have got a baby and have not got a husband. Everybody will laugh and make scorn at bastard. Why you not stop where you are? My *madre* is vera goot to you. She will love the *fanciullo*. Everything vera goot. I wish I was there. Everythings beautiful there, the sky, the water, the vines. If you are goot, I will come and see you again. I was sorry not to be there. Only there is no money there; only in England, which is very rich. I cry when I tell you you are not my wife. My wife old and ugly. When she die, I will espouse you. If she do not die, I think I will poison her. But if you bother, as you say, myself, I will poison you. If you come to England, I will kill you, or you will die in gutter. To kill you is best. Suppose you have impudence and write me another letter. Then I send you an answer. When you open the letter you will fall dead. I will put something in the letter that will make you fall dead. You know vera well I am claver with what I make with my fingers. The Français only very claver to make dishes, but we Romans know what to put in our dishes. Now, petite Louise, be goot. Be quiet, like a little brown mouse, and stop in your hole. Good-bye. How do you do? Curse you!

This singular and horribly grotesque epistle had neither date, signature, nor address.

I examined it closely. Perhaps

somebody was trying to play off a practical joke upon me, wanted me, perhaps, to go to Scotland-yard and make a fool of myself. But there was nothing in the letter to give any clue in the world for the Scotland-yard people to work upon. They would think it a practical joke. It might be easy enough to concoct such a letter. But it was not easy to concoct that quaint delicate Italian caligraphy. That was genuinely and indisputably Italian.

Suddenly the strange identity of name in the two epistles occurred to me. In each case there was a Louise. Good heavens! Could it be possible that the Louise was the same person?—that he had threatened her with death, and that he had carried out this atrocious threat! In each letter there was a Louise; in each case it appeared that the domicile of this Louise was in Italy. But then again there were any number of ladies answering to the name of Louise, probably any number in Italy. There was nothing but the vaguest surmise to connect the two Louises together.

Both letters had evidently been misdirected. But what an extraordinary thing it was that, on the self-same day, I should have received two misdirected letters! Never had such a thing happened to me before in my life. I don't believe that it had ever happened to any other person before in his life. Once I had unfortunately mixed together two letters—one to Fanny's papa, accepting an invitation to dinner, and one to Fanny herself. The latter one, and the much warmer one of the two, fell into the hands of Fanny's papa, for whom it was not at all intended. It had the effect, however, of bringing about an *éclaircissement* all round, and ended in our becoming regularly engaged.

That two misdirected letters should come to me on the same day was beyond any number of odds, or any theory of permutations and combinations; but that those two letters should have reference to the same person appeared to be entirely opposed to any doctrine of chances at all. However, what happens is the unexpected; and I thought of that extraordinary calculating machine of Mr. Babbage's, which will give the same result in thousands and thousands of times, and then, on the ten thousand and first, give a totally different result.

I was in a fog, up a tree, in a balloon—whatever it may be called. Still there was a decided clue to be found. If one of the letters was to be laid aside as a practical joke or an insoluble problem, as a myth, as a fraud, there was this letter from the insurance office, and that at least could be cleared up. So, having to go Citywards in the course of the afternoon, I dropped in before four o'clock, the hour of closing.

Mr. Fortescue, the actuary, received me in his own room. Now and then, I and this gentleman commingled in the amenities of private life. I had a Russell-square connection, in which I often met men of the City, and was particularly attentive to such as were learned in the law. The Bar regulations lay down a set of rules to prevent undue familiarity between solicitors and barristers; but those all disappear when once we get our legs beneath the same mahogany. At such dinner-tables had I met the friendly actuary, who was none the less friendly because I was rather heavily insured myself, and knew a lot of people who were likely, at one time or another, to get themselves insured.

'Look here, Mr. Actuary,' I said, with a laugh, presenting to him the open letter, 'you are putting me on my promotion with a vengeance. You have not only presented me with a wife, but have killed her off for me.'

He shook hands with me and examined the letter.

'What a stupid mistake!' he exclaimed, 'They have put a foreign letter into your envelope, and have no doubt put your letter into a foreign envelope. I will make inquiries. Just look at this.'

He put into my hand some publication of the Statistical Society, which was, doubtless, nice lively reading for actuaries, but less adapted for the taste of the general public.

Presently he returned, bringing in a culprit, who certainly looked excessively foolish.

'Now, Mr. Hill,' he said to a pleasant engaging young fellow of about nineteen, 'this is a pretty state of affairs! What is to become of the Company, and what is to become of yourself, if you are not to be trusted to address a common letter properly? I suppose that this is about the most disgraceful thing which has happened within living memory in the City of London. If this happens again, it will be reported to the Board; and if you get to the Board a second time, you will have to carry your pranks to some other office, Mr. Hill, if any other office is foolish enough to take you, and give you the chance of muddling, Mr. Hill. Do you hear that, Mr. Hill?'

I was quite sorry for the young man. While this process of official wiggling was going on, he blushed the most ingenuous blushes of youth and modesty. I hastened to say that it was simply a mistake that might have happened to

the best of us, and I ventured to feel quite sure that it would not happen again.

'I daresay, I daresay!' exclaimed the actuary, with all the sarcasm which the human voice is capable of throwing into those few brief syllables.

The young fellow gave me a grateful look and was about to retire, when a gesture from the actuary stopped him.

'It's all very well for this gentleman to put in a kind word for you, Hill, and it is kind in him to do so. But pretty well the only thing which we ask of our clerks is to be accurate; and if a clerk can't be accurate he is no good to us, however good he may be in some other line.

'What I say is the fact,' continued Mr. Fortescue as Hill withdrew. 'We are very careful with our clerks. They are generally nominated by our directors and shareholders, who give security for them, and look after them pretty well. It is not a bad thing of them to put their feet safe on the first rung of the City ladder in a place of this sort. But if a fellow's such a baby that he can't be trusted to direct a letter right, the sooner he gets drowned the better all round. The habit of accuracy is not too common among young men, I assure you.'

All this time I was glancing at the new circular, fresh from the ink, which the young clerk had brought me. It simply informed me that my premium, No. 5067, on a policy of 3000*l.* was then due, and that the said policy would become void if not paid within one calendar month; that the notice was sent as a reminder, but that the non-receiving of it could not be pleaded as an excuse for non-payment within the date. Most of my readers are in the

habit of receiving some such circulars.

I should not have ventured to trouble the actuary in his actuarial capacity with the other epistle, but knowing him personally I now produced it and asked his opinion.

He read it over carefully, in fact read it twice, and then gave a whew!

'It is quite possible that it is a silly farcical production. Possibly it may be a real letter, and yet be written in chaff to some woman. Or it is just possible that the thing may be awfully serious.'

I pointed out to him the identity of the woman's name in the two letters.

He was startled for a moment and went to a desk, and bringing out some documents, he was evidently occupied with the comparing of handwriting.

'There is some slight resemblance, but not more than in the common likeness of Italian handwriting. Our client is a Signor Mirobalante, who has a country house in north Italy, between Milan and the lakes. He is half an Englishman, and married an Englishwoman. She is rather delicate, and we charged her a small extra premium in consequence. She had a little property of seventy pounds a year, which dies with her; and consequently he was able to insure her life for a thousand pounds, to guard himself against the loss which he would incur by her decease. I thought that the climate of Italy would have done her good; but it seems to have had a contrary effect. Things do fall out awkwardly sometimes.'

Still I pressed the similarity of name.

'I will take a note of it, certainly. Sometimes even the very

slightest indication turns out to be of use. But I am not even convinced that this queer letter-writer or his wife belongs to Italy at all. It is hardly to be assumed so on the handwriting, or on those few Italian words which have become familiarised as pet phrases in every tongue. He seems to call himself a Roman, and there is an immense difference between the Roman and the Milanese. The most probable thing is that the writer is a little touched in his head.'

With these words our interview came to a conclusion, in which nothing was concluded. The mysterious letters appeared to be an ultimate fact, beyond which one could not advance. My own feeling was simply that of intense mystification. But the feeling soon waxed dim, and disappeared in the crowd of daily incidents, until one day, many months after, it was recalled to my mind in a singular and impressive way.

CHAPTER III.

THE CONDITIONS OF THE PROBLEM.

It happened in the spring of the following year that I was passing a few days of the Easter vacation in the neighbourhood of my old delightful quiet quarters at the Castle. I understood that the Earl and Countess had been spending the winter in the south of France, and had gone on, like so many others, to pass Easter at Rome. Otherwise I should very gladly have rode over to take my lunch and pay my respects to my former kind hosts. As it was, I thought I would go to Bullingford. There is a favourite Latin proverb, *bis repetita placent*. I always like a re-visit as well as a visit. On the re-visit you verify

your past impressions, and consolidate your information. Every English landscape is worthy of, and indeed demands, repeated study before you can thoroughly understand and appreciate it. If Bullingford had been beautiful on my first visit with the scarlets of autumnal tints, it would be none the less so with the opening greens and sweet odours of spring. I could at least once more linger in those grounds and gardens, where I used to smoke my morning cigar, chewing the cud of harmless innocent fancies, or pace the avenue of that park-like meadow, where I had made my first acquaintance with the doings of Bullingford.

My little programme was soon carried out. I put up my horse at the Royal Arms, so called from the reputation of having afforded a hiding-place to King Charles; and to the gratification of mine host, who recognised me at once, I drank off a tankard of his home-brewed. Then I took my walks abroad, and revived my old associations. Finally, I turned into the churchyard; for in every village the church is the central monumental feature, from and to which all local history radiates. In the churchyard I had the good fortune to meet with the excellent Vicar, whose acquaintance I first made at the Castle, and on whom I had some thoughts of calling.

We walked up and down the avenue, the broad avenue of yews facing the old Norman gateway of the church.

'For fifty years, Mr. Marjoribanks, have I been vicar here. I had only been ordained a twelve-month before the last lord but one gave me the living. It is a very sweet spot; but to an ambitious man, or to one fond of change, half a century of rural life would be wearisome.'

'And you do not find it so?'

'Not in the least. Each fresh day comes with the novelty of a new existence, and its sweet familiar surprise of light and music. And let me tell you, my friend, that, although I daresay you young fellows are far in advance of us old fogies in the *savoir-vivre*, I do not myself think that this is the case. We old fellows know what to expect, and also what not to expect.'

'I suppose that is a new form of the old adage, that young people *think* old people fools, but old people *know* that the young ones are.'

'Not at all. I think nothing so ill-natured. I delight in young people. I now love the young people whose grandparents I knew as young people—once upon a time.'

'I suppose you know all your parishioners very well?'

'I should think I did. Whatever curates I may have—and I have had very good ones—I always make a point of taking the baptisms, marriages, and funerals myself. It keeps up my intimacy with all my dearest people.'

'Do you remember that day when we had some conversation once in reference to Lady Bullingford's *chef*?'

The good Vicar's countenance fell, and an unmistakable shadow of chagrin and regret passed over it.

'I remember him well. He married the prettiest girl in the parish during all my fifty years here.'

'What became of her?'

'She is married, and she is dead.'

I was greatly grieved and shocked.

'No! Impossible! Do you really tell me so?'

'Yes, Mr. Marjoribanks. She

married that foreign professional cook or artist, whatever he chose to call himself—French or Italian or English, also whichever he chose to call himself.'

'I believe that man was a very bad lot.'

'I *know* it,' said the Vicar.

'How could such a nice girl as that fling over a worthy man like Wilson, and fancy such a disreputable old blackguard, old enough to be her father?'

'Ah, my young friend, you ask me more than I am able to tell you. The older I live, the more utterly inscrutable does the mind of woman appear to me. Anyhow, she married him, and they stayed in the village for five or six weeks, and then they went away. By and by we had some very unpleasant rumours about them.'

'Such as what?'

'One rumour was that he ill-treated her. There was another rumour that he was married already; but, bless you, he was the sort of man who wanders about the world, and has got a wife in half a dozen different places. Then we heard that she was kept a prisoner in his home in Italy. Then came the news that she was dead.'

'Perhaps he told a lie.'

'He was quite capable of it, but not in this case. He would lose money by her death. She had some seventy pounds a year of her own by her father's will.'

'Perhaps he preferred the money without the wife.'

'But the money went away from him if she died. It would revert to her mother, who, in such a case, would have a power of appointment over it.'

A thought suddenly flashed across my mind. Once more in memory I stood in my friend the actuary's office. Of course such a man, if he could raise a thousand

pounds on his wife's little income, would greatly prefer to do so, instead of a miserable seventy pounds a year, which would not keep him in cigars, let alone horse-flesh.

'Did you ever hear that he insured her life for a thousand pounds?'

'No; I never heard of it.'

'Do you think that he might do so, and afterwards murder her for the sake of the money? You know that there have been men hung for this sort of thing.'

'I quite believe it.'

'In consequence of these rumours, Vicar?'

'Partly in consequence of these rumours,' he answered. 'Rumours are the most extraordinary things in the world. I have never been able to understand them fully.'

'Explain.'

'On the night of that Sunday on which the battle of Waterloo was fought, there was a rumour in London that a great battle had been going on all day, and that the English were victors. Sir Edmund Coke, in his speech for the prosecution in the great Gunpowder Treason Trial, says that at about the time of the plot there was a vague restlessness and agitation in men's minds, the expectation that something awful was about to happen.'

'That is very curious; but forgive me if I say that to a legal and non-imaginative mind the reasoning is indefinite. But you spoke of another reason which made you think this foreigner capable of any villany.'

'I have another reason; but I am afraid that to the kind of mind you indicate the reason will appear still more indefinite and intangible.'

'Nevertheless, let me hear it.'

'You shall. But I must explain it my own way. In the

first place, I am a Swedenborgian.'

'You are a clergyman of the Church of England.'

'Of course I am. But a great many clergymen of the Church of England are Swedenborgians.'

'Go on.'

'But do you know anything about the life of Swedenborg?'

'Very little, and with only an indistinct remembrance.'

'Swedenborg was a man who had a kind of second sight, and to an intense degree cultivated spiritual relationships. On one occasion he exactly described a great fire which was raging hundreds of miles away at the very moment when he described it. He could read the human countenance like an open book. He has told people the inmost secrets of their hearts which they had thought veiled from the knowledge of every human being. He could not only, from his matchless powers as a physiognomist, decipher much of the past, but he could also unveil to a very great extent the designs and intentions of the present moment. Now in some respects I am like the great Swedenborg.'

'How?'

'Not in his power of second sight. That I could never attain to, although I believe there are many simple poor people, especially in the north of Europe, who possess it. But I have made it the business of my life to study faces. And while he and his wife stopped at Bullingford I had many opportunities of studying his face, and I did not at all like it.'

I really thought that this reasoning was uncommonly tentative and shadowy; but I waited for my reverend friend to proceed.

'I discerned in his face the legible record of many a rascality. He was not a person likely to

spare man or woman in his lust and greed. But I read something more than past wickedness in his face. I saw expressed in that face as clearly as if I had seen it in handwriting or heard it in the confessional a present immediate intention of committing some act of villany. Do you know his face well?

‘Very slightly. I only saw it once, and hardly for a minute. I am not certain that I should know it again. But what I saw of it filled me with intense dislike.’

‘But you should have seen that wicked face in mental work just before he left England; its cruel deliberative lines; the quick, suspicious, and yet easily-abashed eyes; a certain kind of darkness which stole over the man’s whole appearance, as if his good angel had deserted him and given him over unaided to the suggestions of the evil one. I would have had the fellow watched by the police, but I knew that he was leaving England, and that our police would not be able to follow him abroad, even if I knew his destination, which is not the case.’

‘And you really believe that the man was meditating crime?’

‘I am as morally sure of it as I can be sure of anything. But let us walk into the village.’

We passed through the lychgate from the churchyard, which was fully adapted for our sombre conversation, into the broad cheerful street. On one side entirely there were rows of elms, giving it a boulevard-like appearance. It had a pleasing irregularity: the little cottage islanded in its garden coming next to the highly-ornamented villa; then came a row of some half-dozen shops, with almost London frontages, and patterns fresh from town; then came the school; then the diminutive town-hall; then the

King’s Arms, where a coach still stopped once a day, and, remote from railways, seemed likely to retain its importance as a first-class hotel. So fresh a wind swept up the street, so cheerful a sunshine lay on all the pleasant places, so blue unclouded a heaven graciously hung over all, so honestly dull was the stare of the simple townsfolk, that I could hardly realise that we had just been discussing a story of Italian craft and villany.

The good Vicar stopped at the door of a very pretty cottage, which, to give it its due, seemed to waver between a cottage and a villa. There was an appearance of great neatness, good taste, and substantial comfort about it.

‘Perhaps you would like to come in with me. Mrs. Grain lives here, Louisa’s mother. She has been very ill of late—insomnia, brought on by trouble about her daughter.’

He gave a slight tap, and then uplifted the latch without waiting for any response. There was a beautiful old lady, pink and white in complexion, in snowy attire, reclining in a large armchair near the fire, by reason of the keen spring wind.

‘How do you do, Mrs. Grain? I know you do not mind a little company now and then. It does you good. This is Mr. Marjoribanks, a friend whom I first met at the Castle. He knows all about poor Louisa.’

‘Did you know my poor dear darter?’ said the old lady, with a little of the *patois* of the country.

‘I did not know her at all, Mrs. Grain, but I have seen her for a minute; and a very charming bright girl she seemed.’

‘Ah, she was all that, my poor dear darter! They want to tell me she be dead; but somehow I cannot think that she be. You

know, sir, perhaps, that I never sleep now.'

'That must be a mistake,' I whispered to the Vicar. 'No human being can live without sleep beyond a very limited time.'

'No doubt she must sleep a little in the daytime and get her forty winks. But I am afraid to say how many days she has been without closing her eyes. The doctors say that it has been an unusually severe and prolonged attack of insomnia.'

'Now,' broke in the old lady, 'whenever, thanks be, I have had a wee bit of sleep, I have dreamed of my poor darter dying. But, bless you, that's nothing. Dreams go by contraries. My dreaming that she's dead only proves that she's alive, if it proves anything.'

'Exactly,' I repeated, 'if it proves anything.'

'But it is very little dreaming that I have the chance of getting. Be it, sir? But when I be awake I constantly see my girl, and she be always alive, and never dead.'

'But how do you mean that you see her?' I asked.

'Well, sir, I do see her; but of course I know, at the same time, that I do not see her. But sometimes she seems to glide into the room. When I look steadfastly at her she seems to be gone. But when I think of her, I feel that she is thinking of me. When I pray for her, I feel that she is praying for me. No, sir; that foreign rascal may have locked her up in some Popish convent, or in the dungeon of the Inquisition; but my girl's alive for all that.'

It is astonishing how the Protestantism of the English people has furnished them with a variety of images of terror suitable for every emergency.

'You see, sir, I do not feel lonely even when I am quite alone.' Unconsciously the old

lady was repeating the language of a great philosopher of antiquity. 'I think over the old days, when she was the best and most loving of children to me. When I see, or think I see, her face, she seems sad and lonely; but she always cheers up, as if she was looking forward to a real meeting even here on earth. I never wear black for her, only this white, which is proper for her dear white soul, whether she is alive or dead. In either case it will not be long before I see her.'

As we left the little garden my venerable friend said,

'And I suppose, Mr. Marjoribanks, that you think that all this is delusion and fancy on the part of my old friend?'

'I confess that you have accurately interpreted my ideas on the subject.'

'It is possible, my young friend, that your cold caustic view is the right one. But at the same time there is a whole world of spiritual and supernatural facts with which you seem to be unacquainted. Have you ever heard of a lady who would lie in a trance for days without food, and during that time her soul was absent from the body? And you have heard, I suppose, of one who was rapt up into the third heaven, and saw invisibles and heard unutterables?'

'I have certainly heard of the latter instance.'

'You will hear of the first instance in a book by Mr. J. C. Hare, a well-known writer of the present time, in an account of his mother by adoption, Mrs. Hare, *Memorials of a Quiet Life*.'

'Yes.'

'There are various other instances of a cognate kind which have occurred to me in the course of a long life, totally different from the ordinary phenomena of

so-called spiritualism. There is not the least doubt in my own mind that this poor woman, during her sleepless days, is often in a kind of trance, during which time and distance are annihilated, and that she is able to hold some kind of intercourse with her daughter, whether she be in heaven or on earth.'

As I passed through the village, on the way to the Vicar's house, for he had kindly asked me to 'restaurate,' we heard the low, sweet, melancholy music of an organ proceeding through an open casement window set in abundant greeneries.

'That is poor Louisa's discarded suitor, James Wilson,' said the Vicar. 'He is out and out the most wonderful young man in our little town. He has saved up money and bought himself an organ, and he has taught himself to play it; and he only plays grand melancholy music. He is one of the best of the readers at our local institution; and has lectured here and in the other villages on a variety of subjects, and has always done so very well.'

At this moment the young man rose from the organ and greeted us with quite a courtly air. If I liked him before I liked him better now; and suffering had done him good. I think it is Schubert the musician who says that those are weak frivolous natures which have never known suffering, that gives refinement and fibre to a man. Suffering is the great civiliser. There was a sweet quiet gravity about his face which contrasted much with that angry expression which it wore when I last saw him, that memorable evening.

That night I puzzled and puzzled over matters. The set of facts which I had become acquainted with that day certainly seemed

to me to stand in relationship with the facts disclosed in the misdirected letters. And my meditations ran this way:

In all scientific discovery there is an abundant use of hypothesis. This is derived from what Tyndall calls the scientific imagination. Our philosophers obtain a large induction of facts, and then they frame a law which will account for the facts. Of course, as their knowledge increases and becomes more accurate, they may see reason to modify or abandon the theory. Perhaps the facts will only strengthen the theory. But they proceed on the assumption that the theory is true in order to discard it or to gain a verification. Now I intend to accept a theory on the matter. I take it for granted that he married this poor girl because he thought she had money, being an extravagant vicious fellow who always wants money beyond anything else. As she has a small annuity he sees a way of making a thousand pounds, either by her death or by the fraud of pretending that she is dead. Now accepting the theory that both these letters relate to the same person, we have the suggestion that he has forged certificates of her death, and has threatened her with real death or infamy in case she returns to this country. (I must here frankly say that the old woman's talk and the Vicar's reasoning had made me lean to the hypothesis that the girl was alive.) In any case I have a precious rascal disclosed with the alternatives of murder or fraud and forgery. I must make it my business to find this rascal out. If I could but restore this young woman to her mother! Alas, that it is impossible to restore her to her old lover! The very worst part of the business will be that old drawback, that in striking at the

husband you will strike at the wife.

Before I left, an incident occurred which afforded just a ray of elucidation. The Vicar said,

‘By the way, I believe I have a letter which very probably belongs to you. It was sent me instead of one which ought to have accompanied some books returned to me from the Castle.’

The note was written in an Italian hand. It was signed Giacomo Beni. It simply said that it was written at the request of the housekeeper, who was accompanying my lord and lady abroad, who had desired him to say that the laundress had returned a variety of articles belonging to Mr. Marjoribanks, and wished to know to what address they should be sent.

I took the note and examined it carefully. I had no hesitation in the world in identifying the handwriting of Giacomo Beni with the handwriting of the threatening letter sent to Louise.

‘I have no doubt the foolish fellow made a mess of a whole lot of letters. They related to business that was no business of his, and so he was not over careful.’

‘One letter at least related to very important business of his,’ I thought to myself, for I had not at that time determined to relate to the good clergyman my extraordinary experience of the two misdirected letters.

I wrote, however, that very night to my friendly actuary of the insurance company, stating that I had gleaned some further evidence supporting my conjecture that a fraud was being attempted upon the society. I had a very kindly letter in reply, in which he expressed his regret that he had not written to me before, as he ought perhaps to have done. He had received no answer whatever to the letter demanding official

confirmation of the documents which he had transmitted. Subsequently he had desired an inspector of agencies, who had happened to be in Italy, to make some inquiries at the place from which Signor Mirobalante had dated. He found that there was no such person there. He thought that he had discovered some faint traces of him, but the man himself had entirely disappeared.

Where, then, was this Beni or Mirobalante? It was impossible to say. The way to further inquiry seemed completely blocked up. I had simply run my head against a dead wall in a blind alley. I made one or two spasmodic attempts, such as going to Scotland-yard and writing to the Countess, to unravel the mystery, but they proved abortive. I wrote myself *Apraktos*.

CHAPTER IV.

A PARTIAL SOLUTION.

I HAD gone down to a remote county to spend part of my vacation, one of those counties where the land is narrowed and is washed on either side by the sea. It is a county ‘sweet and civil,’ to use the expression which old Fuller applies to Suffolk; but though the people are inclined to a proverbial hospitality, the county is but thinly inhabited, and the squires live much apart in their separate granges and manors. I had sent my friends notice of my advent into their shires, and they had sent me a warm-hearted answer, saying that their carriage would meet me at the roadside station.

‘It is just like your luck,’ said the Squire. ‘We have been as dull as we could be for the last two months, and now all of a sud-

den we are in the middle of a set of dinner-parties.'

'Some little bird of the air must have whispered to you,' said my kindly hostess, Mrs. Dunne. 'There is a dinner-party to-night, and another to-morrow night, and another the night after.'

'I assure you, Mrs. Dunne,' I said—but this was rather my social diplomacy, for I confess to a weakness for really good dinner-parties—'I was looking forward to a quiet time with you. It has been all through a rapid summer. You give me very good dinners, and I enjoy your company beyond any others.'

'We only heard from Monsieur Bertrand a quarter of an hour ago. We do not know him very well; so we wrote to say that we should not be able to come, as we expected a friend to be staying with us. We had a most polite letter just now, begging us by all means to bring our friend; so you will of course come with us.'

'Really, Mrs. Dunne, I confess to liking dinner-parties, but night after night is a little too much even for me. I don't see where I am to burn that midnight oil which we lawyers are supposed to consume. I think I had better fling one of them over, and let it be Monsieur Bertrand.'

'There, my boy, you make a great mistake. You stand in your own light. Neither the Rector nor Lord Lister will give you so good a dinner as Monsieur Bertrand,' said Dunne.

'Of course we did not send the same sort of note to Lord Lister and the Rector,' said Mrs. Dunne. 'We simply told them that we should bring you, and they were both very glad to hear it.'

'And who is this Monsieur Bertrand?'

'He is a wealthy French gentleman, who has taken that pretty

place, the Hollows, on the slope of Dunneston Hill. He is very little here, for he travels a great deal; but he is very fond of England, and says that he loves to have a *pied à terre* in it. He has greatly improved the Hollows. If you remember the place, you will be immensely pleased with the alterations. They are evidently people who have travelled a great deal and seen excellent society. We don't really care for madame; but the house is pretty, and the dinners perfection.'

'I really think that I must go to Monsieur Bertrand's.'

'That is right. And so you will to the others. It will be much more social.'

So I went to the three dinners with my kindly host. The Rector's port was as sound as his orthodoxy. He had as good a notion of good things as my Lord Lister. At each house we had all the good things of the season. But the Rector and my lord both gave us the same good dinner, the regulation dinner—soup, fish, *entrées*, joint, game, &c.; but the Frenchman had surprises for us in his entertainment. He had taken care to avoid the regulation dinner, and to give us things which were comparatively novel and piquant. We had Chablis and oysters; then we had soup, such as one does not taste in a quarter of a century; ortolans, capercailzie instead of the traditional turkey, canvas-back ducks instead of the *perdrix toujours*. Our host was a keen-looking man with black hair and sparkling black eyes. A magnificent diamond ring sparkled on his forefinger. His conversation was very interesting—the conversation of a man who had visited many famous places and seen many famous people. But still there was something in the look which irritated

and annoyed me, perhaps in the restlessness of the eye and the sensuality of nose and mouth.

'These ortolans are very delicious,' said Lord Lister. 'My friend, Lord Beaconsfield, makes one of his heroes say, "Let me die eating ortolans to the sound of solemn music."'

'A great many people have died very agreeably while engaged in eating,' was my own remark.

'I remember,' said the Rector, 'reading a dreadful story in one of the periodicals. There was a medical man who made it a special branch of his profession to give an euthanasia to people who were anxious to depart this life. It is the logical outcome of the modern doctrine of pessimism. The guests sat down to a most magnificent repast, poisons more or less strong being skilfully mixed with the viands. Occasionally one or two would get poorly and leave the room, and it was noted that they never made their appearance again.'

'That would be against English law,' said my friend Mr. Dunne, who was a J.P., and thought to come out particularly strong upon the magisterial bench. 'A man got a very heavy sentence some time ago for showing a woman how to poison herself with chloral hydrate.'

'The days of poisoning are, I trust, numbered,' said the clergyman. 'Science overtakes the poisoner in the very moment of his crime. The means of detecting poisons multiply faster than the arts of finding them and using them.'

'I know that it is the custom for medical men and journalists to say so,' said our host, in his bland way; 'but I am only too much afraid that they speak presumptuously. I believe that among our neighbours the Italians even the

common people still retain some of the methods of Locusta and Lucretia. People might be killed by the slightest touch or even by the faintest odours.'

I and several others were strangely interested by this talk about poisons.

'Observe this ring,' he said, and he deliberately took the magnificent diamond ring off his finger. 'I have every reason to believe that this ring once belonged to the Medici family, who were amongst the greatest poisoners in Italy. It was purchased by a friend of mine as a great curiosity. One day he was taken suddenly and severely ill with most violent symptoms. It occurred to me that I would examine this ring, and I discovered in it a slight aperture where poison was secreted. It had been deposited there for more than two hundred years, and had lost little of its virulence. Fortunately in this case I was acquainted with the specific for what I imagined this poison to be. I was so fortunate as to save my friend's life, and he very kindly insisted on presenting me with the ring.'

'And is the ring still poisonous to touch?' demanded the parson, with a look of horror.

'If it poisoned any one it would poison myself,' said our host; 'and of course I have taken care to have it properly secured. But I believe that it still contains highly poisonous matter.'

Whether or not, the talk about poisons had aroused the whole train of associations and put me on the true scent; for while the villain was talking about the ring, he was detected in my sight. This monster was Mirobalante, *alias* Beni, *alias* Bertrand. I recalled now the supple sensuous frame, the villanous look of triumph, the *roué* and *débauché*

whom I had once seen with that fair girl in the avenue of the Bullingford meadows. For more than an hour or two he had baffled my blunt intelligence, that had been blindly groping towards the Nemesis of discovery. I felt it an intolerable injury that for the while I was obliged to keep silent, as I thought it best to do. I knew that I had winning cards in hand; but then at the same time I must play them so as to win.

But nevertheless I felt it quite impossible that I could eat or drink at that man's table any more. I greatly regretted that I had at all tasted his salt. Delicacy after delicacy was passed untasted, and my friend Dunne expressed to me *sotto voce* his opinion that my three big dinners in succession had proved too much for me.

When the ladies had retired—there were very few of them—we sat over our wine, and very good wine too. I would not touch, however, that remarkable port or unpurchaseable Madeira. I withdrew to the bay-window of the dining-room, under the pretence of admiring the moonlit prospect. I gave a quiet motion to mine host to follow me, which he had sufficient gumption to recognise. Then ensued one of the most remarkable dialogues in which I ever bore part in my life.

'I think, M. Bertrand,' I said, 'that you are Italian.'

'No, mon cher monsieur,' he answered, with much urbaneness; 'I am French. I expect I am rather Italian in my accent and complexion. Several people have made the same mistake. I expect that we natives of the South of France have much that is apparently Italian about us.'

'I believe, Monsieur Bertrand, that I have a letter in my pocket belonging to you, but addressed to another person. Your interest-

ing conversation about poisons recalled it to my recollection. It was addressed to a young woman who answers to the name of Louise, and threatened, I am sure quite playfully, to use poison to her in case she returned to England.'

I watched the face narrowly. He did his best to preserve an impression of perfect impassibility. But those mobile features were incapable of preserving an entire reserve. At last he stammered out, not without shame and hesitation, letting an Italian expression escape him in his agitation,

'I think, signor, for once you are altogether under a mistake.'

'Pardon me, there is no mistake. I am the more sure of this as I myself have seen you with a young lady named Louisa, which is really the same as Louise, when I was a guest of Lord Bullingford at the Castle, and you were then the *chef* of his kitchen.'

From red to white, from white to red—the red becoming a fiery red, the white a livid flabby white—the usual transitions of a detected villain's face. Before he had time to utter the renewed denial, which I was sure was coming, I went on:

'I suppose you do not wish me to step forward before the company and denounce you as a liar and a cheat? If not, you will sit down quietly and answer my questions in a way so as to avoid observation.'

I watched my man fixedly. He couched as quietly as a lamb.

'I could give you in charge of the police for cheating the insurance company by means of forged documents.'

'I never got any money from the insurance company!'

I passed over that virtual admission involved in these words, and added,

'By the law of England the attempt to do so is pretty nearly the same as if you had actually done it.'

'It is a very stupid law.'

'Exactly. We English are a very stupid people. But what I want to know is, whether you have added murder to your other accomplishments?'

'I have not committed any murder.'

'Perhaps you would like to do so, monsieur. Perhaps that wonderful ring of yours is not so secured that you could not use it in case of an emergency against a friend or an enemy?'

'I wish I could press it against your heart.'

There was something so wolfish and murderous in the man's expression that I am convinced that he would have tried the chance of life to life if we had been alone upon the deserted heath outside. But I looked at the four fine gentlemen at table, who were languidly sipping their wine and lazily conversing, and knew that they would prove a trusty bodyguard, who would save me from the inconvenience of a ferocious encounter.

'There is no use talking, Monsieur Bertrand, or Monsieur Beni, or Signor Mirobalante — whatever you are pleased to call yourself. You will be good enough to answer one or two questions, or I will give you in charge.'

'And if I satisfy your demands, you will make no further disturbance?'

'That depends on how I am satisfied with your answers.'

'And you will not say anything to these gentlemen?'

'I shall certainly tell my friend Mr. Dunne the sort of man whom he has for his neighbour. But I will not do so for the next six weeks, and you will have time to clear out of the country.'

The unhappy man made a shrug of despair.

'That will not make any real difference to you, Monsieur Bertrand. I wonder why you want to keep up the imposture of being a country gentleman.'

'Because, sir, I am a gentleman, and I like to be with gentlemen, and the English are the best gentlemen anywhere. I am an artist — as much an artist as the President in your Royal Academy. I have composed dinners for Lord Lister there, though he has not known it; and they have not been as good dinners as I have given you under my humble roof to-right. And when I make my money like an artist, I like to spend it like a lord. I like to have a stake and a seat in the country, where I can retire in the intervals of professional work.'

I listened with intent interest to the avowal made by this singular being. I could not help saying,

'And I suppose that all this fine talk is what you have picked up in the houses of the people where you have been?'

'Yes; and few of the painters of pictures and writers of books know as much about them as I know.'

'But, Monsieur le Chef, the time is short. I have some questions to put, and some of them are looking this way. Is your lady Louise alive?'

'You will not give any information to the insurance office?'

'I will not. You have not received any money from them, and it is no part of my business to take any further steps.'

'She is alive.'

'Is she really your wife?'

A horrid scowl passed over his face.

'As I tell you everything, I may as well tell you this. She really is my wife.'

‘And madame?’

‘Madame is clever, madame has money; but she is older than me, and she is ugly. She is not my wife.’

‘Now where is Louise at the present time? You write it down immediately.’

I took out my pocket-book and presented it to him, with a pencil. After a moment's hesitation he wrote down an address. I recognised it as the name of a small Swiss village in an obscure valley on the north side of the Alps.

‘But, monsieur, you will leave me to my repose? When I have completed my circle of professional engagements, I love the peace, the happiness of the country; the fresh air, the open spaces, the nice people of the country. I have made you every possible reparation, and I only ask you to leave me alone. Believe me that it will be best for you.’

I took no notice of his appeal, but went on.

‘Would you mind telling me, monsieur, as a matter of literary information, whether these means and methods of poisoning have really any existence in the present day?’

He smiled grimly, and said grimly, ‘I could have poisoned you all when you were dining here, and not a single carcass of the lot would have showed one trace. I rather wish I had.’

And here this singular conversation terminated. I made a pretence that I was unwell, and returned on foot to my friend's house, which was less than two miles off. My excuses were the more readily received because my thorough inability to enjoy the feast had been noted. All the way back I was busily engaged in thinking how I could best turn to account the extraordinary revelations I had received.

Mr. Dunne returned much earlier than I had expected. ‘It is curious that you had not gone very long before M. Bertrand was taken ill. Before you left we were obliged to support him upstairs.’

The next day I returned to town. A few days later I received the astonishing information that M. Bertrand was dead. He never again came down from the room to which they had borne him.

The so-called Madame Bertrand disappeared very shortly afterwards. It was discovered that the Bertrands were very much in debt, and no attempt was ever made to settle matters.

Nothing ever came out that he died from other than natural causes, after a few days' illness. But remembering how complete was my detection of the man, how depraved and desperate his character, how bitter the disappointment to his ruling passion of display, a dark suspicion has at times crossed my mind that, by some of those modes of poisoning which he seemed to know so well, he had put an end to his own existence. Of course it is a great shock to think that you may indirectly have been the cause of a fellow-creature putting an end to his existence, but I do not see how I could have acted differently. Indeed, I acted for the best; and if things were to come over again, I should do the same thing a second time.

I have only a very few words of epilogue to add to this narration. When, not long afterwards, I took my wedding tour, I made a point of seeking the Swiss valley, where Louise was to be found. I remember the place so well. It lies far from any direct road. Travellers who wished to shorten their journey found a bridle-road, which connected pass with pass.

It was the usual scene. The densely built little village, the narrow darkened pathway, the church with the open door, the deep cool fountain springing up by the wayside, the forests of chestnut and oak climbing the mountain slopes ; and far away, above the solemn pines, the glacier and the snowclad mountain peaks. In this little village I found Louise living with her late husband's mother in the deepest poverty. He had given her nothing. She lived by what she could earn ; she could earn little for herself and her babe. Her villain of a husband had managed by many threats to get her ban-

ished to this forlorn spot. Her greatest grief seemed removed when I repeated to her his statement that she was really his wife. The truth of this statement I had no means of verifying, and did not care to verify it ; enough that it was satisfactory to her own mind. My wife and I had the great happiness of taking her home with us, and restoring her to her mother.

She is Mrs. Wilson now. The boy is a fine little fellow ; but he is not alone in the nursery. Whenever I go to visit at the Castle I shall always go also to visit at the cottage.

AN ISLAND OF SWEET SOUNDS.

'Who loves not wine, women, and songs is a fool all his life.' A free and robust exclamation this. It is Doctor Martin Luther's; and requires all the true force to be derived from the character of the man who uttered it before it can be accepted in an age which has almost forgotten the true meaning of 'Christmas cheer,' and is prone to the vice of mean or malicious misconstruction.

It may easily be imagined that this hearty human quality in the words and habits of the temperate host, who could talk of world-moving themes over a glass of Rhenish or a flagon of ale; that the honest outspoken affection of the loving husband and father, the frequently jovial character of the sonorous singer of melodies, secular and sacred, who found in his psalter and his violoncello consolation against the persecutions of the world, the weakness of the flesh, and the temptations of the devil, aided his ultimate influence on English thought. The great Harry, Defender of the Faith, could be angry, but could scarcely be contemptuous, with an antagonist who might well have written 'Pastance with Good Company,' that hearty song which was among the earliest attempts of 'Prince Harry of Greenwich' to put a good English ditty to a taking tune. Henry himself was a good musician; and both his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, performed admirably on the virginals. In the reign of the latter, the whole country was vocal; for there were few families in which the glee, the round, and

the catch did not take their place among household amusements; and sailors at sea sang their 'Heave ho with a rum below!' to a tune that had something of culture in its harmony. 'England was merry England then;' and though the word merry signified renowned or active rather than cheerful or joyous, the activity and enterprise of the country had a very decided association with popular mirthful observances, and especially with the knowledge and constant practice of music.

There was nothing very remarkable in this; for though in evil times the voice of minstrelsy may have been turned to mourning, England had been, in a certain sense, 'an island of sweet sounds' even from the remote period when the British King Cadwallader regulated and endowed the company of the bards, who were divided into versifiers or makers of poems, players on the harp, and the chorus, who accompanied the music of others with their voices. As to the Anglo-Saxons, music formed one of the four divisions of Board-school education in their time, and, says the Venerable Bede, 'Music is the most worthy, courteous, pleasant, joyous, and lovely of all knowledge; it makes a man gentlemanly in his demeanour, pleasant, courteous, joyous, and lovely. It refreshes the troubled spirit, removes sorrow and headache, expels foul spirits, and cures ill temper and melancholy.' The instruments then in use, according to the same venerable authority, were the viol, 'atola,' psaltery, a kind of many-

stringed lute, drum, cymbals, harp, and organ. The latter was very much like modern examples, since Cassiodorus, who died in the sixth century, says it is, 'as it were, a tower built up of many pipes, from which, by the blast of bellows, a most copious sound is obtained; and, that the same may be composed of fit melody, it is furnished on the inside with wooden tongues, which, being skilfully depressed by the master's fingers, produce grand and very sweet music.' The pipes were gilded and were made of copper; for Gale, in the *Historia Rameniensis*, says that Dunstan gave thirty pounds to make copper pipes of organs. In 669 the Gregorian chants were introduced for church music, and were probably first heard in the island when the great Pope, in recollection of the Saxon children who had arrested his attention in the slave-market at Rome, sent Augustine and his monks on a mission to Ethelbert, who gave them free and safe conduct to Canterbury, whither they went, chanting litanies, to the little church of St. Martin, where the fair Christian consort of the pagan king already held religious service.

As to the secular minstrels, English history resounds with them. From the time when Alfred went as a harper into the Danish camp to the day when Richard of the Lion-heart captivated his Austrian gaolers by his equal powers of singing and drinking, until the legendary Blondel sang beneath his prison-window, and, hearing the responsive refrain, discovered where the lost monarch was held captive, and took home the news to confound the recreant John, the story of the Troubadours and the great freemasonry of music is the story of England and of the English possessions in France. There is evidence, too, that some

distinct recognition in the nature of an academical degree was given to proficients in an art which was held to be an essential part of the education of every gentleman; but it is not till the reign of Edward IV. that we find, as Burney says, music, after long living a vagrant life, and being passed from parish to parish, seeming at length by the favour of this monarch to have acquired a settlement. By this time all kinds of itinerant musicians, mere rustic players of pipe and tabor, rude husbandmen, labourers, and handicraftsmen, had assumed the title and dress of the King's minstrels as an excuse for begging; and a disorderly crew they were, creating scandals in various parts of the country. There was only one prompt remedy, and the King, on the 24th of April 1469, granted a charter to his own proper minstrels, forming a guild, to be governed by a marshal appointed for life, and by two wardens chosen annually, who were empowered to admit brothers and sisters into the guild, and to examine the pretensions of all such as assumed to exercise the minstrel profession. Here we have in effect the first Royal Academy of Music, and it is significant that it was formed somewhat on the plan of those trade guilds or associations of craftsmen which have since been recognised as City Companies, having their special charters, privileges, and liveries. The 'Ordinances touching the King's Household' contain ample and minute directions concerning the duties and emoluments of the thirteen minstrels, 'whereof one is verger; which directeth them on all festival days in their stations of blowings and pipings to such offices as the officer might be warned to prepare for the King's meats and suppers, to be more readier in all services and in due time; and all these sitting in

the hall together, whereof some be trumpets, some with the "shalmes" and small pipes, and some are strange men coming to this Court at five feasts of the year, and then take their wages of household after fourpence-halfpenny by day, after as they have been present in Court, and then to avoid after the next morrow after the feast, besides their other rewards yearly in the King's Exchequer, and clothing with the household, winter and summer, for each of them twenty shillings. And they take nightly amongst them all four gallons ale, and for winter season three candles wax, six candles pitch, four billets for firewood.' They also had lodgings for themselves, and stabling for their horses, two servants to bear their trumpets, pipes, and other instruments, and torch for winter nights, while they blow for supper of the 'Chaundry.' Two minstrels were to remain at Court 'to warn the King's riding household by blowing trumpets when he goeth to horseback, that his household may follow the more readier.'

Here, too, we meet with our old friends the 'waits,' or wachts (musical watchmen). 'A wayte that nightly, from Michaelmas to Shrovetide, pipeth watch within this Court four times, in the summer nights three times, and maketh Bon gayte (Bon guet) at every chamber-door and office as well, for fear of pyckeres and pillars. He eateth in the hall with minstrels, and taketh livery at night, a loaf, a gallon of ale, and for summer nights, two candles pitch, a bushel of coal; and for winter nights, half a loaf of bread, a gallon of ale, four candles pitch, a bushel of coal; daily, whilst he is in Court for his wages in cheque roll allowed iiijd. ob, or else iijd. by discretion of the steward and treasurer; . . . also clothing with

the household yeomen or minstrels; and be he sick he taketh two loaves, two mess of great meat, one gallon ale. . . . Also the yeoman waighte, at the making of Knights of the Bath, for his attendance upon them by night-time in watching in the chapel, hath to his fee all the watching clothing that the knight shall wear upon him.' Then follows the provision for the choristers, or 'children of the chapelle,' who, when they were eighteen years of age, and their voices changed, if they could obtain no other preferment, were, if they assented, assigned by the King to a college of Oxford or Cambridge, of his foundation, 'there to be at finding and study both sufficiently till the King may otherwise advance them.'

This charter or ordinance is interesting because it was the foundation of the subsequent Royal protection of minstrels and choristers of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., who kept a magnificent staff of 'musitions and players,' trumpeters, harpers, luters, singers, sagbuts, rebecke, vialls, bagpipes, minstrels, drummers, and players on flutes and virginals, besides makers of instruments, foreign musicians, and players of interludes, amounting to 73 persons, at an annual cost in money of 1732*l.*, and 41 officers of the chapel who received 476*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.* The same state was preserved by Queen Elizabeth, whose reign was preëminently melodious, though the advance was chiefly in vocal church music, part-songs, and madrigals.

Charles I. restored the charter of Edward IV. with such modifications as suited the times, and again the art of music flourished under the auspices of the 'Marshal Wardens and Cominality of the Arte and Science of Musick in Westminster.' But during the Re-

bellion and the following inter-regnum the ordinary minstrels had a bad time of it, although the Lord Protector was fond of music, both vocal and instrumental; and Anthony à Wood tells a story of James Quin, M.A., one of the senior students of Christ Church. A. W. had some acquaintance with him, and had several times heard him sing with great admiration. His voice was a bass, and he had great command of it. 'Twas very strong and exceeding trouling; but he wanted skill, and could scarcely sing in consort. He had been turned out of his student's place by the Visitors; but being well acquainted with some great men of those times that loved music, they introduced him into the company of Oliver Cromwell, who loved a good voice and instrumental musick well. He heard him sing with very great delight, liquored him with sack, and in conclusion said, "Mr. Quin, you have done very well; what shall I do for you?" To which Quin made answer with great compliments, of which he had command with a great grace, "That your highness would be pleased to restore him to his student's place;" which he did accordingly, and so kept it to his dying day.

At the Restoration some attempts were made by the 'Cominallity of Musick in Westminster' to revive and act upon the charter granted by Charles I.; but they could neither maintain nor enforce their privileges, and only succeeded in involving themselves in law-suits. Perhaps the general practice of the art of music was already so depressed that only a truly national school could have revived a general disposition to cultivate it. At all events, we hear of little more effort till the establishment of the Royal Academy of Music in 1720; and this academy being at that time

nothing more than a privileged society of noblemen and gentlemen, who contributed large sums and received subscriptions for establishing Italian opera, the money, amounting to 50,000*l.*, was soon spent amidst constant quarrels of the patrons of foreign rival musicians—Handel and Bononcini against Faustina and Cuzzoni—until the theatre had to be closed, and the properties and wardrobes sold.

It must be understood that the present Royal Academy of Music is an entirely different institution, established in 1822, and opened in 1823 for the purpose of receiving students. Had as much money been subscribed for its maintenance as was previously spent on the effort to support a series of performances, of which no previous training had qualified the public to be competent judges, it might have become a truly national school; but with a charter which carried a parliamentary grant of 500*l.* a year, and with a constitution which it has been declared requires considerable reformation before it can either fulfil its intentions or coöperate with other societies having the same professed object, it has been the subject of repeated inquiries. Whatever may have been its defects of organisation, with the inadequate means at its disposal it has effected much good and worthy work; but the question at present to be decided is whether other efforts allied in purpose, and willing to coöperate with it rather by friendly rivalry than by any actual amalgamation, will not better promote musical instruction as a recognised branch of national education.

We are now in somewhat the same position as we were at the time of the first 'Royal Academy' with respect to the over-performance and the under-estimation of musical works; for though the art of music has been popularised,

the intelligent study of it has, if anything, been diminished; while the prevalence of *opéra-bouffe* and the vulgarising influences of the music-halls have served to depress, if not to deprave, the public taste. Some of the most successful operettas or comic operas have not only been adapted from the French so far as the words are concerned, but the songs and instrumentation have been stolen and cunningly adapted from a variety of sources; so that a musician with a good memory is less amused by the facility of the 'composers' than he is astonished by the audacious agility with which they skip from air to air or from phrase to phrase, making 'original music' by changing the time or interpolating scraps of melodies. Their knowledge of the art of music is obvious enough; but it renders them liable to the reproach with which the magistrate rebukes the culprit who misdirects his talents.

But let us see what is at present being done to establish musical education in London. Some of the historical references which form the first portion of this article are to be found both in Burney's *History of Music in England* and in an appendix of the First Report (published in 1866) of the Committee appointed to inquire into and report on the state of musical education at home and abroad; and in another part of the report is the evidence of one gentleman, who perhaps did more than any other person living to introduce a system of popular school instruction in music.

John Hullah said, 'Considerable difficulties would arise in the institution of an academy, from the fact that so small a proportion of the higher class takes any real interest in music. One thinks of the great officers, whether in Church or State, and asks who is

there amongst them that cares about music. Who amongst our nobility keeps, or even occasionally engages, an orchestra? Who among his friends would care to hear it if he did? Look at the list of subscribers to the Philharmonic, or any similar concerts. English people of rank go to the Opera. That is a social affair, which has little to do with music itself. I do not think that among the higher classes music is respected or valued very much. No Englishman hesitates to confess his ignorance of music; indeed, he generally proclaims rather than confesses his deficiencies in this matter, as though he expected to be admired for them.' Mr. Hullah was of opinion that the taste for and the practice of music among the higher classes was stamped out in the seventeenth century by the influence of Puritanism. Whether this be so or not, we must take into account to what purpose music had been put among the more profligate class, and what was the kind of stage representation and musical entertainment of the Restoration. Perhaps we may be in a better position to estimate it than our grandfathers were, for they at least were spared the inanities and indecencies that are exhibited with brilliant scenery and dresses at some of our music-halls and theatres.

But let us for a moment make an exception to the utter decay of musical appreciation. In the City, at all events, some attempt has always been made to maintain the good old fashion of social meetings for singing, and to support small societies for instrumental practice. Even the free-and-easy or the harmonic meeting of past times has often been distinguished by some remarkable display of talent; but above that there were and still are some societies which, like the old Cecilian, that met in London

Wall, brought people together who were neither too fine to learn nor too conceited to be criticised. The daily exodus of citizens to the suburbs, and the decreasing number of well-to-do residents within even the four-mile radius, has tended to diminish the number and influence of such societies. And it is a remarkable fact that even now there are so many glee-clubs and musical meetings, some of them held in ancient taverns, close under the sound of Bow bells, that we might well look to 'the City' for some independent, or at least distinct, effort to establish a school of its own. No such municipality as that of London should be without its Conservatoire, even though the harmonious association might be called by a less obtrusive name; and there are at this moment some significant evidences that a school or institution for the study and practice of music will find its promoters and first supporters in the 'Corporation of London.' It is thirteen years since the report containing Mr. Hullah's evidence, and the evidence of half the eminent musical professors in the metropolis, was published; and to-day we have, in the shape of a Blue-book, the sixth Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, from which we learn how the Royal Academy of Music applied in 1854 for a grant of a site on the estate of the Commission for the purpose of a building; how in 1867, as the result of a communication with the Society of Arts for the purpose of enlarging the basis of the Academy and making it a more national institution, they were asked for a grant of 10,000*l.* and an arrangement for occupying the new Albert Hall; how they could not afford the needful pecuniary aid, but recommended the Academy to continue the negotiation with the Committee of the Hall. Nothing more was

heard from the Academy, however, and the result of the inquiry of the Society of Arts and the evidence which had been heard seems to have been their abandonment of the Academy, and the promotion of a 'National Training School for Music.' The Albert Hall was opened in 1871, and the committee of the proposed institution obtained from the Commissioners a piece of ground near the Hall, at an annual rental of 80*l.*; Mr. C. J. Freake having undertaken to erect the school-building, and to present the school with the free use of it for five years, the Commissioners agreeing to postpone the ground-rent for that period. Mr. Freake has since made an absolute gift to the Prince of Wales, in trust for the nation, of the building, the foundation-stone of which was laid by the Duke of Edinburgh on the 13th December 1873. By the 17th May 1876 the building was completed and the school opened.

It is, perhaps, a little remarkable that the new school should commence its operations by a request to the Commissioners for the support which had already been refused to the Royal Academy of Music, and that they accompanied their application with expressions of regret that the older institution had been unsuccessful in its application. The claim of the new society was that it was the cherished wish of the late Prince Consort that a national school for music should be founded, and that the society was supported by scholarships of 40*l.* and 50*l.* a year each. Eighty-two of these scholarships had been endowed for a period of five years, and the committee hoped that before long 100 scholarships would be established; but 300 were necessary for the proper development of the school. This was in April 1877, and the Commissioners did not feel justified in

granting the request. The committee of the Society of Arts had considered that a national academy should afford gratuitous education to a limited number of students having great musical gifts, who, after proper training at the public expense, would devote their talents to the service of the public as professors of the art of music; and the same committee were also of opinion that, besides training free scholars, a national school for music should be open to the public at large on the payment of adequate fees, which might be graduated according to the musical ability of the pupil, and be auxiliary to the support of the institution. These conclusions were come to in reference to the Royal Academy of Music; and to secure the ends proposed the committee desired the establishment of a 'National Academy of Music,' to be formed by enlarging the basis of action of the existing Royal Academy.

Taking this opinion into consideration, the Commissioners, in the words of their report just issued, 'while they admire the energy which has been displayed in establishing the National Training School as a separate institution, cannot help regretting that it was not directed in the path pointed out by the committee of the Society of Arts. They think it right to state that it is their settled conviction that the union of the Royal Academy of Music and the National Training School will be the best means of promoting the national development of high musical training. They have, therefore, heard with satisfaction that an important movement, under the leadership of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and his Royal Highness the Prince Christian, has been made to establish a National College of Music on a

more permanent and wider basis than any existing institution, and that the union of the Royal Academy and National Training School of Music forms one of the central objects of the movement.'

Now this conclusion, from a body which has up to the present time professed itself to be unable to afford substantial aid to either of the institutions which it desires to be amalgamated, is perhaps encouraging, but is scarcely to be regarded with absolute complacency, when it is remembered that serious objection has also been taken to the constitution and system of each of the institutions in question. What may be the outcome of the alliance of two defective or imperfect organisations it is needless now to inquire; but may we not pause to ask whether it is desirable in the true interests of musical education to establish an all-absorbing central institution which is to be called national, but which will perhaps in the end be so far from national that it will become much less truly representative of the whole country than any one out of a dozen flourishing provincial associations is representative of the wide district of which it is the centre. When we remember that London alone is a large province, and that the Royal Academy of Music, after many years of existence, is only barely recognised by the Commissioners and by the committee of the Society of Arts as fulfilling to a small degree the purpose for which it was founded, the proposal to amalgamate it with another society with few greater pretensions scarcely seems promising; and we are left to consider whether a number of well-organised institutions, each representing a wide area, and all working harmoniously and under favourable auspices, will not better secure the object of true musical education

than a central school, which will have the name without the power of being 'national.' The question seems likely to be answered from a quarter in which it is only reasonable to suppose that it should have some weight. It was in the City and amongst City people that the real domestic practice of music was best maintained during the years when elsewhere it had fallen into neglect; and it is in the City and among City people in the suburbs that we may find glee-clubs, harmonic societies, and the general love for and practice of music, which alone will enable any institution to succeed.

The Corporation of the City, in accordance with their old reputation as supporters of good cheer, consented to promote the establishment of the National Training School for Music by founding ten free scholarships of 40*l.* each for five years; but it had already been suggested that the City of London, as the very centre and, as it were, the keynote of this island of sweet sounds, might reasonably support an institution of its own, which should in time rise to the importance and usefulness of an organisation somewhat resembling the conservatoires which are so admirably supported by other large municipalities in Europe.

On the 17th of September 1873, Mr. John Bath—one of the representatives for Bridge Ward, and a gentleman whose knowledge as well as his love of music makes him an authority on the subject—moved a reference from the Court of Common Council 'as to the best means of providing approved musical performances, &c., in the Guildhall, or in any other way to patronise the science of music in the City of London and for the public benefit.' Mr. Bath proposed that the Court should patronise the organisation of a Free Orches-

tral and Vocal Association, to be called the Musical Society of the City of London, and that it should bear the expense of such society from year to year; the admission to the Society to be on the ground of merit only, through a committee of management; and to consist of from 500 to 1000 persons, who would be educated from week to week in the noblest of all sciences, and who would occasionally by public performances manifest the determination of the Court to do those things which are best adapted for the education and instruction of the public.

It was a matter of notoriety, Mr. Bath said, that many of the best amateurs in London were engaged during the daytime in the City in their business or professions, and were already performers in the best of the concerts given in London, and so far from these gentlemen being an expense, they would be glad to contribute towards the expenses of the Society. At Gresham College, in the City Law Courts, and at the Guildhall itself might be found the practice-room, and, after making all calculations, the cost of the Society might be put at 200*l.* a year; not a very large sum, when it is considered that technical education is now being revived by the action of the City Companies, from whom a contribution might well be given to promote instruction in an art long ago recognised as an important branch of education by the foundation and maintenance of a musical lecture at Gresham College.

There is now sufficient evidence to show that Mr. Bath had by no means over-estimated the desire of City people to form a society which, with a little judicious aid from the Corporation, may develop into an institution of the good old pattern, but with modern facilities for instruction in the

theory of music, and for holding public performances. But corporate bodies move slowly, and that of London is no exception to the rule; so it was not till June 1875 that a musical deputation of the Corporation was appointed, and even then it was in connection with the Training School for Music, to which the City cash contributed ten scholarships, and not with any immediate purpose either of founding or promoting an independent institution. Still the possible formation of such a society as that suggested by Mr. Bath was kept in view; and though no official impetus seems to have been given to the movement, and no promise of pecuniary aid was used as a stimulus, not only has an association for the practice of music been established, but it has already vindicated the ancient harmonious character of the City. In January 1879, the Guildhall Amateur Orchestral Society was formed for the performance of classical music of the best masters; and it already consists of nearly one hundred members, under the able direction of Mr. Weist Hill, a conductor whose reputation is sufficient not only to indicate the genuine character of the association, but to guarantee the completeness of its arrangements. The title of the society was adopted by permission of the City Lands Committee, and it holds its meetings in Aldermanbury or in Guildhall. That, in the words of the report of the musical deputation, it is 'now one of the largest and best amateur orchestras in England,' though it has only been in existence a few months, may be admitted, since it has given good evidence of its proficiency. As a practical expression of their sympathy with the progress of musical education, the Corporation referred to their committee to make

arrangements for three morning concerts to be given in the Egyptian Hall, at the Mansion House, during the present year. The first was by the pupils of the National Training School, and was an admirable performance; the second, by the pupils of the Royal Academy of Music, was so excellent as to warrant the belief that there is no need to despair of the continued existence of this original institution for musical education; and the third, which took place on the 26th of April, was by the Guildhall Orchestral Society, and consisted chiefly of a selection of instrumental music, some of it of a difficult character, but performed with a delicacy and precision which made the concert one of the special musical events of the season. This was the result after less than four months' existence of the society, and it should encourage us to believe that there is no lack either of musical ability or of a love for music of a high order among the commoners of England, and that the anniversary of the City Society may be marked by a still further development of its resources, as a centre of instruction as well as of practice. A grand morning concert in Guildhall would be an event of which the significance would not soon be lost; and as the entire estimated cost of the Orchestral Society for the year is calculated to be only about 200*l.*, of which above two-thirds will be realised by subscriptions of ordinary and honorary members, it is scarcely too much to expect that musical London will regard with complacency the proposed grant to this institution of an annual sum far less in amount than the cost of a single banquet for the celebration of some small event in which nobody is particularly interested.

AN ADIEU.

SING me the song you were singing,
When love thrilled the music through ;
And to me the words kept bringing
A magical music of you.
In a withered rose, though the eyes are wet,
And a hope that is lost, there is sweetness yet.

Give me the hand you gave me,
When you said I should call you wife,
In the hour of despair to save me,
And the death that is mine in life.
In a withered rose, though the eyes are wet,
And a hope that is lost, there is sweetness yet.

Kiss me once as you used to kiss me,
When I thought they were all my own ;
I shall go, and you will not miss me,
While I shall be all alone.
In a withered rose, though the eyes are wet,
And a hope that is lost, there is sweetness yet.

Only pray that love left behind you,
And the vows you have held so light,
Have never a voice to remind you
Of a heart that is broken to-night.
In a withered rose, though the eyes are wet,
And a hope that is lost, there is sweetness yet. T.

MY FIRST BALL, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

CHAPTER I.

I WONDER if it is egotistical to write a story about oneself?

The idea that it may be so has just crossed my mind, as I find myself seated, pen in hand, intending to write down some of the vivid memories of my long-past youth. They throng on my brain with a distinctness that makes it hard to realise that I am an old woman, and that the well-loved faces and bright scenes that rise so clearly before my mind's eye are only dim shadows of former days, and possess no life or interest to any one but myself.

Well, I suppose it *is* egotistical ; but I cannot help it. I must only ask my readers to have patience with an old woman's weakness, and remember that some day they themselves may be old.

The part of my life I can recall most distinctly is when I was about seventeen, and had come up to Dublin with my mother to enter into all the delights of a first season.

I was an only child, and had lived up to that time in a quiet lonely part of Ireland. My father died when I was very young, so that I had no recollection of him ; but I always listened eagerly to what I heard of him from others, and that was not a little, for there was no subject on which the tenants and servants loved so to hold forth as that of 'the masther.' And many a time I have listened with breathless interest to some exciting tale of his feats in the hunting-field, of his lavish gene-

rosity, or of some little act of kindness or courtesy, which the Irish peasantry—rough, ignorant, and barbarous though they are deemed—can appreciate with a keenness that might put their more cultivated neighbours to shame.

I was accustomed from my childhood to have every whim gratified, to be adored for my father's sake, and to think the name of O'Moore the first in the land.

Such influences of course were not good, and I fancy my mother thought so, for she proposed our coming up to Dublin to stay with my father's brother and his family.

I had never been from home, and felt almost brokenhearted when the day of our departure arrived. The week before I had spent making a round of farewell visits to all the cabins, and had been wept over and condoled with as heartily as if I were on the point of emigrating.

'Shure you won't forget us, mavourneen?' was generally the last word as I left them. And with choking sobs I promised I never would—never, and that I was determined to come back on the very first opportunity.

It was in the dusk of a chill evening in February that we arrived at my uncle's house in Merion-square. The change from the cheerless streets to the warm drawing-room was very pleasant ; and as my uncle came forward to meet us with his frank hearty voice, all my shyness vanished ; and when he took my hands in

both of his and kissed me, as if I had been his own daughter, I felt I loved him already.

‘You are very like your father, my dear,’ he said softly. ‘He was my only brother, and I feel his loss still.’

And when I looked up into his handsome face, I saw that his eyes were dim with tears.

I was then introduced to my cousins—three pretty girls and a young man about twenty-five, uncle Ralph’s only son, and the darling of his heart. Their mother had died when they were all very young, and they had grown up under the care of an old governess:

‘Well, deary,’ said my mother, when we were in our own room that night, ‘how do you like them all, and do you still wish to go home next week?’

‘No,’ I answered, laughing; ‘I think I shall love them. They are so kind and pretty, and seem to like me.’

‘I wonder at that,’ she said, fondly stroking my hair.

‘But, mamma,’ I went on, putting my arm round her neck, ‘I shall never love them as I love you. No one in the world shall ever be to me what you are!’

‘Don’t make rash promises,’ she said, laughing. ‘I remember saying the same to my mother when I was your age, but I changed my mind when I met your father.’

‘I am not likely to meet any one like papa,’ I answered, with confident ignorance. ‘There is not the least chance that any one will come between you and me.’ Soon after I was fast asleep, and in my dreams was again at home sitting in one of the cabins, with the smell of the peat smoke strong in my nostrils, and listening to one of the well-known tales of the heroic feats of the O’Moores.

CHAPTER II.

I WAS actually going to a ball; my first ball. What girl does not look back to her first ball with mingled feelings of regret and amusement? Amusement at the wonderful importance with which the event was anticipated, and regret that never again will she have the same fresh innocent delight in the idea of being for the first time in the important position of a grown-up young lady, and having a partner with whiskers.

My mother dressed me herself, and the love and pride I saw in her dear face gave me more pleasure than the most ardent admiration from a stranger could have done.

‘Now look at yourself, Katie,’ she said, when the last finishing touch had been put, ‘and tell me if you are satisfied.’

She led me to the mirror as she spoke, and I saw a tall slight figure attired in floating snowy tulle, unrelieved by any colour; and a face lit by large brown eyes, and crowned by heavy braids of gold hair.

I had never seen myself look like this before, and as I stood contemplating my own reflection, a delicious consciousness that I was beautiful stole over me and brought the blood to my cheek; a joyous recognition of the power of beauty made my heart beat high. I turned to my mother to tell her I was quite satisfied, when the sight of her deep mourning struck my heart with a sudden chill.

I remembered that she too had been beautiful, young, and joyous; but the thought was too much at variance with my present mood to be long entertained, and with a gay parting kiss I took up my gloves and fan and ran down to the

drawing-room, where my cousins were waiting.

A cry of delight greeted my entrance.

'Katie, you look beautiful!' the girls said simultaneously.

'You little witch, you will break the hearts of half the people you meet to-night. Does she not look like a fairy, Bertie?' they asked their brother, who had stood silently by.

'Very like,' he answered quietly.

The words sounded almost cold, but as I looked up and caught his eye mine involuntarily fell. There was no mistaking his expression of open admiration, fast becoming something more. It was not new to me, young and inexperienced as I was. I knew that this man was learning to love me with the whole strength of his passionate nature.

The knowledge half pleased, half alarmed me. My vanity was flattered by the thought that I, a little insignificant girl of seventeen, had such power over this handsome man of the world, that my lightest word was law to him; but again I was almost frightened when I reflected that perhaps the future happiness or misery of his life lay in my hands. Such were the thoughts that now occupied my mind, and made me long to be once more at home, away from all the feverish excitement of city life.

'What makes you look so grave, little one?' a soft voice whispered in my ear.

I turned, and saw cousin Mary's sweet face.

'Are you not coming?' I said, surprised to see that she was still in the same dress she had worn at dinner.

'No, dear,' she answered, smiling. 'I am too old and sensible to dance.'

'O, that is nonsense, Mary. I

heard you say a few days ago you are only twenty-five. No one is old at that age.'

'People may feel *very* old even at twenty-five, though I hope you will not, dear,' she answered. 'You must have such a long and happy life that you can never learn to feel old.'

Mary spoke lightly, but I guessed there was some hidden meaning in her words, and I felt sorry for her as I looked up into her sweet face, and thought remorsefully that I had never noticed its sadness before. Bending down, she gave me one of her warm affectionate kisses. I always liked Mary's kisses; they were such real caresses—not like the uncomfortable pecks and dabs that some people give in all sincerity of affection, and others seem to think quite satisfactory.

'You must go now, dear,' she said; 'they are calling you;' and in another moment I was seated in the carriage, which was driven through the lighted streets.

My courage failed terribly as I entered the ballroom. I felt such a waif in that brilliant animated scene. Every one but myself looked so happy, and had some one to talk to; but my reflections were cut short by hearing our hostess say,

'Miss O'Moore, may I introduce my friend Mr. Douglas to you?'

The unembarrassed, well-bred air of the tall, dark, handsome stranger she presented as my partner for the first dance made me feel dreadfully shy—so shy that I found it utterly impossible to utter a single word. I could not remember even one of the little speeches I had thought of for days before as the correct style of talk wherewith to amuse my partners at the ball; but once launched amid the joyous crowd of waltzers, I forgot all my shy-

ness—forgot everything save the delight of dancing, and I entered into the spirit of the ball with as much zest as if I had known no previous forebodings.

‘I think you like dancing?’ my partner said, when I stopped at last quite breathless, turning a pair of laughing dark eyes on me as he spoke.

‘Like it!’ I exclaimed. ‘It is so delightful; I wish that I could go to a ball every night.’

‘You would soon tire of them,’ Mr. Douglas said.

‘I don’t think so,’ I replied. ‘But I shall not have the chance.’

‘Here are other partners coming for you,’ he remarked, ‘so I must yield my place; but won’t you keep another waltz for me?’

During the rest of the evening I had no reason to complain of having no one to speak to, introductions following one another in such quick succession that I found it difficult to distinguish my partners. Towards the end of the evening Bertie came up to me.

‘You have not danced once with me,’ he said crossly.

‘You have not asked me,’ I answered saucily.

‘Well, will you give me this waltz?’ he pleaded.

‘I can’t, Bertie; I am engaged to Mr. Douglas.’

‘What! dancing with him again?’ he said impatiently. ‘It seems to me that he has been your partner all the evening.’

‘No, indeed,’ I said eagerly. ‘I have only—’ But the subject of our discussion came to claim me before I could finish the sentence, and I left Bertie with a sullen moodiness on his face I had never seen there before.

‘You are beginning to look tired,’ my companion said, as we moved off. ‘Suppose we take a turn through the rooms instead of dancing?’

I gladly assented, as my feet were at last beginning to grow very weary.

‘Mr. Douglas,’ I asked suddenly, ‘who is that lovely girl?’

‘I don’t see any lovely girl,’ he replied, as he looked round.

‘O, you must see her!’ I insisted. ‘She is sitting near the end of the conservatory dressed in black tulle, with crimson roses in her dress and diamonds in her hair. Besides, you *must* know her,’ I continued; ‘I saw you dance with her to-night.’

‘O, is it that girl you mean?’ turning his eyes towards the lady who had attracted my attention. ‘Yes, I do know her. She is Miss Cecile Hamilton.’

Something in the tone of his voice made me look at him in surprise. I saw that his face was strangely darkened, and that his mouth had a sneering hard expression.

‘Don’t you like her?’ I could not help asking. ‘She is so beautiful; she must be good.’

‘Does that always follow?’ he asked, with a smile, while his face cleared. ‘Well, she *is* very charming when she likes.’

I turned from him to look again at Miss Hamilton. She was leaning back in a low armchair, her face turned slightly upward, listening smilingly to the conversation of a tall man, who was bending over her as he talked. Hers was a fair high-bred face, with deep azure eyes and a delicately-curved mouth, crowned with gleaming golden hair, amid whose tresses the diamonds shone like stars—a face one would have fancied resembled Hypatia’s as she faced her audience in the lecture-room.

Whilst I was still gazing at Miss Hamilton she turned towards us, and as my eyes met hers I felt the hot blood rush to my cheeks.

I was angry with myself for allowing her to see my confusion. Her face did not change except for a slight raising of the straight pencilled brows. Rising from her seat, she advanced slowly, and spoke a few words to my companion.

'What a stupid ball, Alan!' she observed, fanning herself languidly. 'But perhaps you may not have found it so?'

What a contrast there was to her beautiful face in the harsh metallic tones of her voice! As I listened, her resemblance to the fair Alexandrian philosopher faded suddenly.

'She called him by his Christian name. They must know each other very well,' I thought. 'Why did he not say so?'

'Yes, I have enjoyed it very much,' Mr. Douglas said in reply to her query.

'I thought so,' she remarked, with a slight laugh. 'Well, every one to their taste. I found it dull. Good-night; I suppose you will be at the concert to-morrow? Alboni is to sing, so that it will be worth going to,' and without waiting for a reply she moved away on the arm of her companion.

'Here is your cousin coming for you,' remarked Mr. Douglas, breaking the awkward silence.

A moment after Bertie joined us.

'I have been looking everywhere for you. All the others are waiting down-stairs.'

'I am so sorry,' I replied; 'I did not know you wanted me.'

'It is I who am to blame,' interrupted Mr. Douglas, 'for having detained Miss O'Moore. I can only ask her to forgive me.'

He spoke gravely; but I detected a mischievous gleam of fun in his eyes. I think Bertie saw it too, as, with rather a curt reply,

he hurried me away, and observed a solemn silence during the drive home.

CHAPTER III.

THAT memorable ball was the herald of many others, which, together with rides in the Park, shopping, and visits, kept our time always occupied. I had quite lost my shyness and timidity, and was fast developing into a very self-possessed, easily bored, and fashionable young lady. I had become so used to my altered life—my old happy childhood seemed so far off and unreal—that I sometimes could hardly persuade myself it was not all a dream, and that I had never known surroundings different from those of the present.

Sometimes I felt weary of it all as memory went back wistfully to the lovely country and the wild beautiful scenery where my youth was spent; and I longed to see once more the warm-hearted humble friends who loved me so truly. One of those moods came over me on an evening when I sat by the fire in what was still called 'the schoolroom.' The others had gone to a concert, leaving me behind at my own earnest request, and I anticipated with much pleasure the quiet evening I should have with Mary. The room was only lighted by the cheery fire. I had then, and still have, a fancy for firelight. There is something so cosy in its fitful ruddy blaze, shining now on one object, now on another, and then comes the picturesque effect produced by the deep mysterious shadow which envelopes one part of the room, while the rest is illuminated with fleeting radiance. Drawing my chair close to the fender, I leant

back among the cushions, and, looking dreamily into the glowing coals, was soon so absorbed in thought that I did not notice the entrance of Mary, until she said,

‘Of what are you thinking, Katie?’

‘Nothing at all, except that I feel very comfortable;’ but the blood rushed to my cheeks as I spoke, and I felt thankful she could not see my face, for I had been thinking of one who was seldom absent from my thoughts.

‘What a cosy evening we shall have together!’ Mary said, as she seated herself on the rug at my feet, leaning her head against me. ‘I feel just in the humour for a long gossip.’

Yet she seemed in no haste to begin, but gazed silently into the fire, while I stroked her soft brown hair caressingly, and watched her sweet face while the firelight played over it. How sad it looked to-night! The soft delicate lips were tremulous, and the eyes were misty with hushed tears.

‘Katie, do you know of what I am thinking?’ she asked, looking up suddenly and meeting my earnest gaze fixed on her.

‘I am thinking of one night six years ago, when I was only nineteen, and so happy, that I thought it was impossible I could ever know sorrow or loneliness. The whole world was bright and beautiful to me, and my future fair and sunny as love and wealth could make it. Katie, I was going to be married—’

Mary stopped suddenly, and a choking sob caught her voice; then, after a moment’s pause, she resumed:

‘I shall not mention his name; but that does not matter. He is dead now. And, O Katie, I can never tell you how I loved him.

He was all the world to me; I seemed to live only in his presence; I felt restless and unhappy in his absence, and I was all in all to him.

‘One night, just a week before the day fixed for our wedding, we went to a ball given specially for us, and he was to meet me there. O, it seems but yesterday when I think of it! My dress was like that which you wore at your first ball, Katie. He always liked me to dress in white.’

She stopped again and put her hands to her forehead, then without removing them she continued:

‘He had not come when we arrived; but I knew he would be late, as he had an engagement likely to detain him. The night wore on, and still he did not come. I was in the middle of a waltz, when I saw some people whispering at the door and looking at me. I knew there was something wrong, and went to see what it was. At first they would not tell me, and strove to keep me back when I endeavoured to leave the room; but I broke from them, and very soon I knew it all. He had been thrown from a high mail phaeton, almost at the very doorsteps, and was carried senseless into the house.

“You must not see him,” some one said to me as I tried to force my way into the room where he was, but I did not heed them, and was soon beside the couch on which he lay. A couple of doctors stood on the other side. His eyes were closed, and his breath came in long painful gasps; but, thank God, he was not disfigured in the slightest degree, and as I looked at him I could not believe what they told me, that the hurt was mortal, and that he would never see another sunrise.’

I put my arms round Mary’s

neck, and my tears fell fast. Her eyes were tearless, but her voice was hoarse and low with the memory of a great agony as she went on :

‘After a little he opened his eyes and recognised me at once. They left us alone, and for the remaining hours of his life I had my arms round him, and his head lay on my breast when he died. After that I think I was mad for awhile, and only prayed that I too might die ; but in time I grew calmer, and I am now learning to be content with my lot. But, Katie, you cannot wonder now that I feel old, or that I never go to balls ?’

I cannot answer Mary. I only press my arms close round her and cry silently. My brave patient cousin ! How I loved and pitied her as I listened to her sad history, and learned the story of a life made old before its time !

‘I should not have told you all this, dear,’ she said, after a pause, ‘but to-night the memory of it came back so vividly that I could not resist the impulse to talk to you about it. Do not cry, Katie. The past is past, and I am content to be patient until I join him where I know he awaits my coming. And now we will talk of your own concerns, Katie,’ looking up as she spoke, with her own sweet smile. ‘You have been so good, listening to all I had to say, that I think you should have your turn now.’

‘I have no “concerns,” as you call them,’ I answered hastily ; ‘I would much rather talk about yours.’

‘That is nonsense,’ she returned, still smiling. ‘Do you think I can’t see how things are going on, Katie ? Have you never thought seriously of Mr. Douglas ? Do you not know that he loves you ?’

As she spoke the burning colour rushed back to my cheeks. It was the first time my secret had been hinted at, and Mary’s words set my brain in a whirl ; but it was not painful emotion that thus overcame me. In the few weeks I had known Mr. Douglas I had learned unconsciously to love him. It was very sweet, this new passion that possessed me, though I had never thought over it seriously, never allowed it to take a definite shape in my mind, but had let my life flow on in a vague delirious dream, my first thought each day being that, before it closed, I might meet Alan, and that my happiness would be complete when I did so. He had never told me that he loved me ; but I knew he did, and never wondered at his silence. I saw how his eyes lighted up with pleasure when we met, how his voice changed and softened, as a man’s always does when speaking to the woman he loves. Knowing all this, I was content in the happy present.

While Mary continued to talk of Mr. Douglas I did not check her, but listened silently, and gave myself up to the thrall of this new passionate happiness that possessed me. She told me she had seen our love for each other growing day by day, that my lover was highly thought of and very rich, and that if I married him I had every prospect of happiness. I let Mary talk on without interruption, my thoughts lingering over the bright future she pictured for me.

It was late ere we parted for the night, and when I fell asleep I dreamt uneasily of the proud blue eyes and stately beauty of Cecile Hamilton.

CHAPTER IV.

At the approach of summer my uncle suggested our going to the sea for a little rest and change. We were soon comfortably settled in a cheerful house close to the pier at Kingstown, and overlooking the lovely bay of Dublin. The change from the hot bustling city was delightful to me, who always loved the sea. For hours I sat watching the gay scene before our windows. The harbour dotted with graceful yachts and boats of all sizes, the fashionably-dressed groups walking on the pier, were all objects of the greatest interest; but I loved better still to look across the bright dancing waves towards Howth, which, with their changing lights and shades, reminded me of a great opal resting on the sea. Moreover, Douglas was always with us. Every day there was some excursion or plan of amusement that could not be carried out without his coöperation. His yacht was always at our disposal, and half our time was spent on board: sometimes scudding rapidly over the crisp blue waves; at others, moving lazily about the harbour, watching with languid interest from under an awning the movements of the numerous yachts and boats bound on pleasure-excursions like ours. How well I can recall Alan as he looked on those bright summer days in his loose yachting-dress of blue serge, that suited his powerful figure as no other dress did, the clear bronze of his complexion deepened by exposure to the sun, and his crisp dark hair crowned with a little red cap!

Mamma had returned home some time before, but my uncle would not allow me to accompany her, and I was only too glad to stay. And so day after day glided by

almost unnoticed by me. I was perfectly happy, and never even wondered why Alan remained silent when there seemed nothing to prevent his declaring his love. I never imagined that my present joy must come to an end. I only knew that we loved each other, and I cared and wished for nothing more. A crisis came at last, and when least expected, as all great changes do come when we are unprepared for them—when the thread of our lives seems running so smoothly, so evenly, until the thread snaps suddenly, and we know in that moment that all is changed, that never again will life be quite the same.

It was the evening of a close sultry day. The heat had been intense, and the cool breeze that just rippled the water was deliciously refreshing. The mellow light of the full moon flooded the sea with its soft radiance. Some one proposed a walk, and in a short time we all sauntered slowly down the pier—Alan and I together, as usual. After a time we separated from the others. Alan was very silent, and I could see in the moonlight a look I had never noticed on his face before—a look of utter pain and weariness, as if he were sorely tried and tempted.

‘Will you come up here?’ he asked abruptly, as he led the way to a flight of steps on the other side of the pier, where the rough stones were thrown loosely together, with the waves dashing against them. The spot was quite deserted, and I followed him silently. For a few moments we stood looking across the waste of moonlit waters. Then he spoke.

‘Katie,’ he began—and my heart gave a bound, for it was the first time he had called me by my Christian name—‘Katie, I have something to tell you, though I think

you must have guessed it already. 'Tis that I love you, Katie—love you as I never loved any one before. O child, you do not, cannot know what you are to me! You are all I care for in life, Katie. If I must give you up, what is to become of me?' His voice was hoarse and broken, and he spoke like one labouring under some strong emotion, which he vainly strove to overcome. I felt half terrified as I listened, though the subtle joy that his words sent through me overcame the fear. 'I think you love me?' he went on more quietly. 'I don't think I have mistaken your sweet eyes. O Katie, listen to me, and have pity on me! Don't send me away from you!' Without waiting for an answer, he continued: 'You recollect our first meeting? It was at your first ball. O my darling, how well I remember you that night in your pure white dress and pearls, and your brown eyes shining with excitement and pleasure! Do you remember asking me who was that lovely girl sitting in the conservatory, and my saying she was Cecile Hamilton?'

'Yes,' I said wonderingly. I could not understand what this girl had to do with me.

'Years ago,' he resumed, 'when she and I were boy and girl together, we were thrown very much in each other's way, and I fancied myself in love with her. I thought she returned my affection, and she promised to marry me.' He stopped for an instant, as if uttering the words was too much for him, while I in perfect silence stood waiting to hear the end. 'There is no use making a long story of it,' he resumed. 'I found out my mistake only too soon—found out it was my money she wanted, not myself, as I in my blind vanity had imagined. We were considered

too young to marry then, but she was sure of her game; having my promise, she was content to wait. But she has changed her mind lately; and to-day she wrote from London, where she and her mother are staying at present, asking me to join them, and implying that arrangements for the wedding had better be begun at once. And now, Katie,' he went on, with a sudden change of voice, turning as he spoke, and seizing my hands in a firm clasp, 'it lies with you to say what answer I shall give to that letter. Only say that you love me, that you will be my wife, and I will break the bonds that have so long held me, and be once more a free man. O my darling, don't hesitate! Think how happy our lives would be together, how miserable apart! How can we bear to be separated, or, worse still, to meet, only to feel that we are more completely sundered than if seas divided us?'

His hands tightened their clasp on mine. His pleading eyes looked into my own with a great loving tenderness in their depths. All was silent around us, but the faint low murmur of the sea, the soft darkness of the summer night, seemed to close around and shroud us from every other living thing. It remained with me to decide whether we should be always together or for ever parted. It was a terrible temptation. This woman he spoke of did not love him; his loss would not cost her a pang. Why should he keep his pledge when his heart was mine, and we were all in all to each other?

I reasoned thus, blindly catching at any shadow of hope, as a drowning man clutches at a straw. In the midst of this chaos of thought a picture I had seen a short time previously rose before my mental vision—a picture of a young girl and her lover standing

together on the eve of the awful day of St. Bartholomew, she trying to fasten on his arm a badge that would insure his safety, because it was the symbol of a faith forsworn. I saw again the tender but firm look on the face of the lover as he put aside the dimpled hands that sought to save him by dishonour; the agony of knowing that when he parted from her he went to his death, mingled with the glory of a martyr's resolve that would not even for her sake sully his soul with untruth. I felt (though I tried to suppress the thought) that if I yielded and married this man, who was dearer to me than all the world beside, he could not be so dear to me in the future as if we were parted now.

'I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.'

My mind was made up. I think Alan saw my decision in my eyes, for he grew deadly pale and reeled slightly where he stood. My lips felt so parched and dry that at first I could not utter a word; but with a great effort I said,

'Alan, we must say good-bye.'

'You cannot mean it, Katie. Think over it again. Child, you do not know what you are doing.'

A deadly faintness came over me as he spoke. The struggle had been too intense for my strength, and I could hardly speak.

'I have thought of it,' I said at last, 'and I cannot alter my determination. O Alan, how could we be happy if a broken vow was the means of uniting us?'

'I know you are right, my darling; but how *can* I give you up? My own true-hearted love, can you forgive me for all the misery I have caused you? But I did not mean it, Katie. Often did I resolve to go out of the way

of temptation; but I was a coward, and postponed the evil day.'

His voice sounded indistinctly in my ears, my head began to reel, and I should have fallen had he not caught me in his arms and held me close to his heart. I knew that this was our farewell.

'God bless and keep you, my own love,' he whispered. 'Good-bye, Katie; you are the only woman I ever loved. Parting from you is worse than death.'

I could not answer him; I could only free myself from his clasp and turn away. He followed, and we both remained silent until we rejoined our party. I heard the sound of voices mingled with their gay laughter, but I felt as if in a dream. At the hall-door they stayed for some time, arranging a boating-party for the next day. I heard Alan trying to excuse himself on the plea of business; but his excuses were overruled, and all preliminaries settled. At last I got away to the solitude of my own room, and, opening the window, leaned forward into the balmy air, though I could not feel the beauty of that calm summer night. The happy dream in which I had lived for months was ended, and I well knew that the joy of life was over too, that the only thing that could bring happiness to me I had refused; and yet I felt glad that no remorseful memory would wound me with its sting. How that night passed I never knew; but at last I fell into a heavy slumber, from which I was wakened by all the cheerful sounds and stir of busy life. What a glad bright day it looked, with no cloud to mar the sunshine sparkling so joyously on the laughing blue waves!

I went down-stairs, and was glad to take an active part in the preparations for the picnic, glad to do anything that would keep

my thoughts from the memory of the previous night. Once or twice I saw Mary's kind grave eyes fixed wistfully on me. I think she knew something was wrong, but, with her usual tact, she waited for me to tell her. I could not bear her glance, and avoided her till we were about to leave; then I drew close to Mary, and asked to be allowed to stay with her. I don't know how it was arranged, but when we started I found she, Alan Douglas, a sailor, and myself were the only occupants of our boat. Alan and I hardly exchanged a word. I did not even trust myself to look at him; yet I was glad to be with him once more, though I knew the barrier that divided us, knew that tomorrow he would be with the girl who prized him for his money. For the present, the great longing to be near him that still haunted me was satisfied.

We rowed silently over the calm blue water, that danced and rippled in the sunshine, regardless of the quiet dead that lay so cold and still beneath it. The wind gradually freshened, and the boatman hoisting a sail, our little bark flew like a bird over the sea. Alan left his seat and came close to us. He and I were near each other again, and I have often since then been so thankful that it was so. The wind rose higher and the sky darkened as we sped along. Suddenly the sailor started up and seized hold of the sail, while he uttered a cry of alarm. The next moment the little boat had swung over on her side, and we were all struggling in the water. I felt myself sinking lower and lower, the hoarse murmur of the waves sounding in my ears like thunder, until the cruel flood closed over my head and I became unconscious.

When my senses returned, I found myself lying in my own

bed, opposite the window, through which I could see the sky flushed with the warm glow of a glorious sunset. When I moved some one bent over me, and I heard Mary's soft voice.

'How do you feel now, darling? Do not try to get up,' she added, seeing me about to rise. 'You had much better lie still.'

'But, Mary,' I said, suddenly remembering everything that had passed, 'how did it happen? Do tell me all about the accident.'

'There was a sudden squall,' she replied, 'that struck the boat before the sail could be lowered, and capsized us. But, thank God, you are safe, my darling,' and she kissed me fondly.

Then I saw that her face was deadly pale, and her eyes red and swollen from weeping. A horrible fear crept over me.

'Mary, how is he?' I gasped. 'Is Alan safe?'

She did not speak for a moment; then she took me in her arms, and while her tears rained fast on my upturned face, she whispered,

'O Katie, my poor, poor child, how can I tell you? Alan is dead.'

Soon after, she led me to the door of the room where he lay, and I went in alone. The last rays of the setting sun stole through the window, and fell on his face like a glory. He looked so grand as he lay there in the great stillness of death, with the sunbeams softly touching him and a radiant peace on his face, the peace of one who would never more have care or sorrow. As I looked for the last time at the face I loved so well, I grew calmer. Alan was now my own; death had united, not severed us. No one else could now claim a share in the love that was mine to the last.

Every one was very tender and kind in that dark time, and I then learned to value Bertie as he deserved. Poor Bertie, who still loved me, in spite of my neglect and coldness. But I could not return the love he lavished on me now, nor consent to be his wife, nor let another fill Alan's place in my heart.

After a time I returned, and mamma and I have lived ever since in the dear old home of my childhood. Mary sometimes comes to stay with us for months. These are our happiest times. Mine is a busy life. I feel cheerful and content, but I am fast merging into what I used to think could not exist—a happy old maid.

A. C.

A WAYWARD BEAUTY.

FRESH as a rosebud gathered in June,
And sweet as a violet culled in May,
And fair as the light of the silver moon
When wheat-sheaves glisten beneath her ray,—
All this, and more than all this, is she
Whom the eyes of my soul are longing to see.

I promised to take her down to-night
To the *fête* in the village beneath the hill;
She promised to wait in the waning light
At the trysting-place, and I know she will;
And if I am late we may lose the boat,
And her temper's as short as her petticoat.

And she will be decked in silk and lace;
The glimmer of pearls on her neck will be;
But gloss and gleam will pale when her face
Looks out of its own pure doors at me.
For satin and silk have a sombre guise
By the purple velvet of those dear eyes.

White will the ruffles be on her breast,
Whiter the bosom that throbs below;
A white dove fluttering into its nest
Was her hand when it fashioned loop and bow;
And all too utterly fair for me
Is her soul in its virgin purity.

When we are down at the *fête* to-night
Lovers will gather about Jeannette.
I ask her sometimes if she thinks it right,
And she says that we are not married yet;
That she's only like others—she'd rather be
Dead and buried than not *à la mode*, you see!

J. T. B. W.

LONDON SOCIETY.

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THE GHOST IN THE BANK OF ENGLAND.

I.

AND why not in the Bank of England?

If I had said in some ruined Rhenish castle, or in some ancient graveyard, or on some lonely wind-swept moor where murderers have swung and rattled their bones in chains, the question would not be worth asking. Nay, there are places in London where a dream-haunted man who walks the streets arm in arm with the past would expect to meet ghosts whose name is legion. If Tower Hill be not the very Brocken, the very heart and centre of ghostland, then these unhappy spirits must indeed be left without a home. If ghosts be memories struggling hard against burial, and giving life to places where life and death have been more strongly intensified than elsewhere, then must the ghosts be as many in London as its bricks and stones. Speaking purely in the language of fancy, I should not be astonished to learn that even ghostly bulls and bears bargained for phantom scrip in Capel-court itself, remembering what mosses of memory gather about gold; and *Lloyd's* should have as many *revenants* as there are wrecks at the bottom of the sea. It is true

that the Bank of England would not be chosen at once by a ghost-hunter as a hunting-ground. It is not more than a hundred and forty-five years old, so that there has scarcely been time enough for a ghost to grow. It has never, so far as I am aware, been the scene of a murder. It is the world's type of substantiality and of reality. It is built upon the rock of strong fact, and carried on, down to its smallest details, by the very perfection of human machinery. It goes to sleep soundly at night, and lives and works only by day. There is scarcely a chink in its substance large enough for the tiniest fancy to be hatched in. And yet, even here, those who have eyes to see might happen to meet some such figure as that of the founder himself, first a Preacher of the Word among the Scotch hills, then a Buccaneer of the Spanish Main, then a Prince of political finance, finally wrecked and ruined upon the shadow of Darien. Fauntleroy and Mathison would be at least as likely to haunt the place where their hearts were as the spirit of a murderer to cling to the scene of his crime. And what has become of the ghosts of Robert Thorne, Merchant Taylor, and of John Kendricke,

and of the Houlblons, all buried in the ancient church of St. Christopher le Stock which was pulled down in order that the more important Temple might have wider room to grow in? They must needs prowl about the Bank court, for want of graves wherein to lie.

But it is of no mere historical fancy, termed 'Ghost' by courtesy, of which I am about to tell this story—which is my own. I have no more belief in the ghosts of legend than the majority of men and women. But I have been driven, at bitter cost, and sorely against my will, to learn that not only in Heaven and Earth, but in the Bank of England to boot, are more things than have been hitherto dreamed of by the most imaginative accountants and the most romantic cashiers. It is a true story: and it will accordingly be obvious, as I proceed, why I have thought it advisable, in most instances, to use certain names which will not be found in the Bank records under the identical form that I have given them. I give real names whenever obvious reasons for suppression do not apply.

Most stories end with a marriage. Mine begins with one.

The marriage was my own: and it was also Annie Burdon's. I won't say it was the happiest day of my life; but it was the very happiest up till then. I think we both liked our wedding-day the better for knowing that all our friends and relations on both sides thought us a couple of lunatics. The suspicion that they were very likely right gave a zest of romance to our hand-in-hand plunge into life which is wanting to those who walk quietly into smooth waters. So far as we could make out, our lunacy lay in my having no money and no prospects, and in her having no prospects and no money.

She, as the second cousin of a baronet, should have looked higher, and, as the youngest of a country curate's five daughters, ought to have looked very decidedly richer. I, as a very young surgeon with no private means, ought to have waited till I could buy a practice and a carriage before I invested in a wife as the most expensive part of a medical trade-plant. The truth of the matter is that I had come down to D—to see if the place was really unhealthy enough to make it worth a new comer's while to settle there. I found it nothing of the kind, but I found it admirably suited to find a wife in. So far as the Rev. John Burdon's fifth daughter was concerned, never did a love story run more smoothly. Singularly enough, to decide that the place was not worth trying, and to decide that Annie was the only girl in any place worth marrying, took up precisely the same number of journeys and the same amount of time.

We married—wisely, I thought more than fifty years ago; wisely, I think still, and know. But wisdom is very apt to look like rashness to on-lookers. I believe we only obtained a certain amount of family countenance on the ground that if we did not marry as things were and on the strength of what might be, Annie—whose obstinacy was as well known as her warmth of heart—would outwait every better chance that the years of youth might bring her. After all, a penniless doctor, with all his way to make, was better than nobody, and—well, the long and the short of it is we left D—for London as rich as two young people can be who have not means to live together for more than the space of a honeymoon.

I ought to say that I had been too hard a student to make many

friends, without being brilliant enough to stand out from the mass, and, till I fell in love, without any desire to push myself forward. I had never had more than a student's ambition, who finds in books his only real world; but now all things were changed. My first and foremost duty was to justify Annie's thoroughgoing belief in me by getting on, instead of merely drifting along. I set to work, and conquered my naturally retiring temper by trying very hard indeed.

If I had not been married I should not have tried; but then, on the other hand, the fact that made me try to win seemed to make me fail in winning. We took lodgings in a poor neighbourhood, where many patients might mean a few fees; we economised more and more; and I occasionally earned a guinea or two here and there from the medical journals. But we could not afford to wait, and meanwhile things kept getting worse instead of better. Sympathy sufficed to tell me of what Annie was thinking when she looked so grave: for I was beginning to accuse myself of having wronged the one woman I loved by marrying her. She, I knew, was wronging me by accusing herself of keeping me down; and yet I knew that she, as well as I, would have shared starvation rather than escape it by undoing what we had done. Love did not even look towards the window, though Poverty was knocking furiously at the door.

At last, when things had reached the threshold of the very worst, I was offered the place of surgeon on a ship bound for Jamaica, with a prospect of finding a West Indian settlement at the end of a few voyages. It was the only sort of appointment I had not asked for, because it was the only sort that would necessarily divide me from

Annie; and therefore, as a matter of course, it was the only offer that came to me of its own accord. I was sorely tempted to say no. But there was nothing else to be done; and very shortly I should have to support not only a wife, but a child. That made the parting all the harder and all the more imperative at the same time.

So I made arrangements with my employers to pay my wages to my wife during my sailings, sent her down to her father's, and went on my first voyage.

The *Darien*, which was my ship, had many passengers; but none of them gave me much trouble in my professional capacity save one. But then he made up for everybody.

His name was Julius Mendez—a singular name for an Englishman; but I was told that he represented an old West Indian commercial house which had been established very nearly, if not quite, as long ago as the Spanish times. One of the ladies on board nicknamed him 'the Buccaneer.' But to my fancy he looked much more like a descendant of one of those much more successful free-traders who bought and sold what the pirates and buccaneers took by the strong hand. I have never wondered what became of Captain Kidd's treasures. I expect some of the forefathers of Mr. Julius Mendez, and others like them, could account if they pleased for every dollar, and had sent it down to their remote descendant in company with their features. Mr. Mendez was a small, dried-up, bilious-looking man of between fifty and sixty, with a black fringe round a yellow bald scalp, a long hooked nose, and a pair of sharp black eyes round which had been pressed the claws of a whole flock of crows. His whole face was pinched and keen; his expression,

harassed, eager, and yet not without dignity. People who knew something of him at home said he was a miser; others, who professed to know him better, said that, whatever one hand scraped in, the other threw away in all sorts of solitary self-indulgences that men call pleasures. Nobody spoke well of him, and most seemed a little afraid of him. In manner, he was always polite, but never cordial.

But I had not been twenty-four hours at sea before I found out his ruling passion, or rather his ruling terror. It was a morbid dread of death, and a perpetual fear that he was going to die, which almost amounted to a monomania. He undoubtedly had a very sluggish liver, but that did not account for such exaggerated symptoms of hypochondria. From the moment he found out I was the surgeon, I had no peace with him. He discovered some new and alarming symptom in himself every day at least, and more often twice or thrice every day. I expect, from his talk, that he studied medical books whenever he was alone, and cultivated the art, common enough, of feeling in himself every new symptom of which he read. I had to treat Mr. Mendez for heart, stomach, brain,—every organ that he had about him, or rather to treat him for liver disease while affecting to treat him for these. And yet, where health was not concerned, he was no coward. The *Darien* was once in real peril; and while the other passengers were thinking of the boats, Mr. Mendez had no thought but for an itching in the nose, which he had heard was a symptom of incipient brain-softening. At last, I did not know whether most to detest or to pity Mr. Mendez.

The day before we were due at Kingston, said he,

‘Mr. Wilson, I want to make a

bargain with you. I have the greatest possible objection to every medical man in Jamaica; and if I had not, there is none that could give me his whole time. The fact is—it is nothing to me whether you believe it or not—I am in the most imminent peril of dying by some bodily disease before the end of my fifty-seventh year. I shall be fifty-seven on the tenth of September; and if I once pass that date alive, I may safely look forward to nearly forty years of increasing health and happiness. Of course you think I am talking nonsense; but that is not the question. Perhaps I am an astrologer; perhaps the mystery of Ob—which you are aware the black slaves brought with them from Africa to America, and which has never died—is something very different from the mere fetish worship which you doctors of mere science suppose. The question is that *I* am convinced of what I say, and with what *I* know to be reason. But my death is a threat only, not a doom, and is avertible by unsleeping skill. You are a stranger to Jamaica—you are young—you are free from other engagements—you have your whole time—you want money—and I trust your skill and your honour. Stay with me at my place till midnight on the tenth of September; it will be worth your while.’

I certainly felt disposed to transfer my attentions from the liver to the brain. But, in any case, what harm should I do by accepting the offer? Men with a fancy like that upon them have been known, and that not seldom, to die of their fancy. Some sort of disease he must have, whether of brain or otherwise, that wanted watching; and it was only too true that I wanted money as much as any man. I did not like my patient, nor did I like the prospect of be-

ing shut up alone with him for two months to come ; but I had already learned that beggars must not be choosers. In short, I became private and confidential physician to Mr. Julius Mendez.

Mr. Mendez carried on his business at Kingston ; but he carried me with him to a sugar plantation near Trelawney, in the western part of the island. I was nominally at liberty to pass the greater part of my time in my own way, but in effect I seldom had an hour of liberty. Mr. Mendez had few neighbours, and saw none of them. He devoted himself to the discovery of symptoms, and I had to be on the spot to kill them as they came. His household consisted only of some black servants ruled over by an old mulatto woman, who acted as cook, nurse, and housekeeper ; and I had to draw up recipes for dishes as if they were prescriptions. It was in vain that I tried the effect of horse-exercise, regular living, and open air. He followed all my directions with business-like care and punctually ; and though the man grew to be as well as one who keeps a liver can ever expect to be, nothing would disabuse him of his central and ruling idea. 'Why should he dread death so much?' I often thought. 'He has nobody else to live for.'

I gathered little or nothing from others about his history or character, and indeed he had somehow made me feel it to be a sort of honourable understanding between us that I was not to inquire. He certainly held a good position in the island, and it was hard to say whether the higher families held aloof from him or he from them. At the end of the first month he paid me fifty guineas—the amount agreed upon—which I immediately sent off to Annie. And so there was half my time gone. So eager was I for the tenth of Sep-

tember that I made a table of days like a schoolboy impatient for the holidays, scoring each one off as it went by. At last, thank Heaven, the tenth of September came.

Never shall I forget the state of Julius Mendez on that fatal day. He was far too preoccupied to have symptoms. He had tried to sleep late, but anxiety and excitement woke him early. He spent the whole day till six in the evening in an armchair with his fingers on his pulse, and with me by his side. He made me know what the temptation to strangle a man means. At six o'clock I made him take some food ; but he trembled at every morsel. At seven he began to grow feverish ; at nine I began to be seriously alarmed. No doubt he was getting terrified out of his senses—but he might die of imagination. I gave him an opiate, hoping that he might sleep till past the fatal hour. But it did not act on his excited brain. And so, at last, the remaining three hours dragged by—and, at last, struck the first stroke of twelve.

He rose from his chair, and leaned on me, counting them as they fell slowly : 'Ten—eleven—twelve !'

I don't think that I should myself have been surprised had he dropped down dead at the last chime. But, on the contrary, he drew a deep sigh of relief, and turned to me triumphantly.

'Thank you, Wilson,' said he, taking my hand. 'You've given me a forty years' lease of life, and I thank you. I am now fifty-seven years old, and have the best part of life still to come. I don't want you to think me inhospitable or ungrateful, but I shall be obliged by your leaving me to-morrow morning without seeing me again. Thanks to you, I've done with doctors now. Here is your second cheque for

fifty guineas. By noon to-morrow I shall expect to hear you are gone.'

I certainly thought that my dismissal, under the circumstances, was odd and abrupt; but I was used to the eccentricities of Mr. Mendez, and was so utterly sick of them that I was glad at heart to be thus allowed to run away as soon as my time was out without seeming ill-mannered. I thanked him for his cheque, which was made payable in Kingston: we shook hands, and parted, and that was the last I ever saw of Mr. Julius Mendez of Trelawney.

Matters had been so arranged—I fancy by the special intervention of Mr. Mendez—that I was to return on board the *Darien* in a week or two. Meanwhile I sent the bulk of the second cheque to Annie, keeping only a few pounds to last me till the day of sailing. But, before that day came, the low-lying sugar-lands in which I had been living had done their work—I was prostrate with yellow fever.

II.

I LOOKED like a ghost myself when one day, long afterwards, I reached my father-in-law's at D——. Had I been a real ghost, nobody could less have expected to see me. I had written, of course, from Kingston as soon as I was strong enough to hold a pen; but my letter had never been delivered—the Burdon family had been scattered to the winds. My father-in-law had died a month ago. One of the sons, however (I learned in the village), had gone into an auctioneer's office in the county town, and I got there, by walking—weak as I was, I had not money enough to carry me otherwise. Tom Burdon was a young Englishman of the sort that makes a point of never being surprised at anything, or being

glad to see anybody. He told me that one brother was here, another there, and both doing badly; that the sisters were looking out for situations, and that Annie was—thank God for that!—there, with him.

'And by the way,' he added, as if it were an after-thought, 'she's got a baby with her. I suppose you'll stop and dine?'

Need I describe such a meeting? For full five minutes I was happier than I had been even on my wedding day. The poor girl had shown her characteristic obstinacy by insisting on it that I must be dead, while everybody else would have it that I had deserted her to relieve myself of a burden. To her, it was as if her own true heart had called me from the grave. And then she gave me our child, whom she had thought an orphan. We had happiness enough for that one day.

But—for the future days? It was desperate to think of them; well nigh impossible to face them. My health had terribly given way—it would have been certain death to return to Jamaica for at least a year, and then it would be useless and out of my power. I had thrown away the only opening into practice into which I had ever put my finger. Annie had no saleable accomplishments even if I could have brought myself to let her use them when I was doing nothing; and then she was a young mother, whose hands were overfull. Stolid Tom Burdon had been as good as gold to both mother and child; but he had already done more than it was fair he should do, even for a widowed sister. Well, I must give up all my professional hopes and get a situation in some sort of office, like Tom—plain reading, writing, and arithmetic are after all the only useful kinds of learning in time of need.

Worry and anxiety preyed upon me more and more, as the days slipped away and brought me nothing; and my health kept growing worse instead of better. My failing strength led to a state of nervous prostration, in which the superstitious fancies of my late patient seemed much less absurd to me than when I had been well and strong. It was almost as if he had decoyed me to his detestable sugar plantation, where all sorts of wild notions and strange practices lingered among the neighbouring Maroons, in order that he might convey to himself the additional years of health and life which had been given to me—as if there were only a certain amount of human vitality in the world, so that what one man gains he must needs take from another. Of course I knew such a fancy to be the merest nonsensical nerve-trick; but I seemed at that time to see and hear everything more clearly than one possibly can in a normal state of the brain, so that substances often became shadowy, and shadows substantial. I could not help seeing that my anxieties reflected themselves doubly in my poor wife, and that she was haunted by some feeling about me which she dared not name to herself, but which I understood perfectly well. We had one very substantial comfort, however—the boy thrived exceedingly.

I knew all the time that my nervous state was simply the result of bodily weakness, and that it would pass if only I could contrive to get strong. I need not recount the way in which we managed to live through those bitter weeks—the very few pounds I made by my pen; the sale of little personal treasures, which we had kept throughout our original poverty; the chance scraps of employment I found in the town—and so

on, and so on. It was all heartless and hopeless, and every penny I made seemed to make getting the next harder instead of easier.

But one day, when I was at Annie's writing-desk (not yet doomed to be sold) looking for a pen wherewith to write something or other for a local journal, my eye fell on an unopened letter directed to 'Andrew Wilson, Esq., M.D., care of Mrs. Wilson, D—— Rectory, near ——, England.' It had been posted in Spanish Town as far back as the 12th of September.

'Bless me!' said Annie, as I held it up to her, 'I put that letter away for you when it came; and then everything put it out of my head.'

And well it might—the loss of her father, the breaking up of her home, the supposed death of her husband and his return, and the birth of her boy. I opened it—it contained a letter and another envelope, sealed, and also addressed to me.

The letter was as follows:

'September 12th, 188—.

My dear Wilson,—You must have thought it strange that I did not recognise your success farther than by the fee which you would have received had you failed. I said nothing at the time, because, firstly, I felt sure you would make a fuss about receiving more than your due, and because I wanted all the thanks, in that supreme moment of my life, to be spoken by me; and secondly (to be frank) because I did not wish to enable you, for reasons of my own, to remain in Jamaica. Having learned from you Mrs. Wilson's address, I send this to await your arrival at home. Pray be kind enough to accept it, by way of thanks, from yours very faithfully,
JULIUS MENDEZ.'

I tore open the second envelope—it contained this :

*' London, the 12th September 188—.
To the Chief Cashier of the Bank of
England.*

*Pay to Andrew Wilson, Esq.,
M.D., or Order, One Thousand
Pounds.*

£1000 0 0

JULIUS MENDEZ.'

Could it be a dream that I held in my hand a piece of paper worth a thousand pounds, and for my own? Why, it meant everything—health, ease of mind, and a strong wedge to drive into the world! Annie started across the room to me—she thought I was fainting. And all this weary while we had had a fortune between our fingers! No wonder that, for a moment, I took it for some practical joke such as they play in dreamland, between sleeping and waking. A cheque for a thousand pounds on the Bank of England is just what a man in my plight would dream of, just as the starving dream of feasting.

But it was real enough—there it lay, tangible and true, before Annie's eyes and mine. Of course I had no real scruple about accepting it: Julius Mendez was certainly not the man to spend more upon others than he could amply afford, and, in truth, it had once or twice occurred to me that the incessant services of two such months and their consequences had been rather poorly paid for, though of course I had no right to complain. The least possible hesitation about taking so handsome and generous a gratuity, otherwise than as a loan to be repaid from its hoped-for results, I could not help feeling; but, in any case, I had not only myself to think of; there were Annie and the boy. The cheque had all the air of being a gift from the skies,

of which gratitude as well as need forbade refusal. I had rather that I had been paid it for what I had really done than for what Mr. Mendez only believed I had done—but then who can tell, in such a case, what one has really done or not done? In short, I accepted the gift—and everybody must decide for himself whether I did right or wrong.

I relieved myself by writing a letter of thanks to my late patient, taking care to let him know how welcome his generosity had become. After consultation with Annie, we decided not to take Tom into our confidence immediately; we wanted to do for him all we could out of our fortune—which seemed to us inexhaustible—and we knew that if he knew its limits just then, he would refuse to take as much as we wanted to give him. So, just for the time, I let him know that I had an unexpected stroke of good fortune, which gave me a professional opening and required my immediate presence in town. And he, who made a point of being never either glad or sorry or surprised or interested or curious about anything, simply said, 'Very well.'

It is not good to think that money should have any effect upon such sacred things as the joys and sorrows of a wife and mother—but, though it is not good to think, it must be good to be; for it is true. I saw in Annie's face, and heard in her voice, how much things had suddenly changed with me—hope was born again. We had not dared, for weeks, to mention our future; to-night we talked of it almost till the sun rose. Our united knowledge of business was small, and possibly our plans ran a little wild, but still they were feasible. So much, added to what I might earn, would enable us to live for a year while I was recover-

ing and looking out for the best means of starting fairly—supposing we had to wait so long; if not, there would be so much saved. A second so much should be made a fund for the purchase of a partnership or practice. A third so much should enable me to insure my life for another thousand. The rest should go as far as it would in pushing forward Annie's brothers and sisters—more particularly Tom.

Next morning I started for London, feeling, like almost everybody who has never had any dealings of the smallest consequence with Banks and Bankers, that I had to cash my cheque and receive my own money with my own hands, before opening an account with it elsewhere. I spent almost my last shilling on an inside place in the London coach, with a cheque for a thousand pounds safe in my pocket-book.

I happened to have but one fellow traveller—an old gentleman named Deacon, with whom I had become slightly acquainted. He was a fine old fellow, who in his eighty-seventh year was more hale, sound, and active than most men are at sixty—one of the best examples of a sound mind in a sound body that I ever knew. He had been in business in London a generation or two ago, but had retired upon a competence among his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and was as well known in his native town as the steeple, where he was respected and consulted upon all subjects by all people. His one senile symptom was a formidable propensity to tell anecdotes of his younger days, without telling them very well; but, strange to say, he seldom told the same twice over. I rather sadly contrasted my feeble self, scarcely more than a third of his age, but wrapped up thickly from every

least draught that could blow, with this hale old man, who, though it was one of the bleakest days of a biting spring, scorned even a single greatcoat or wrapper, and only, out of consideration for me, insisted on closing the windows.

'Going all the way to town?' asked Mr. Deacon, in his strong hearty voice, that seemed able to knock a man down and pick him up again.

'Yes—on business,' said I, a little proud of so new a word.

'So am I, worse luck. I'm going to give our Member a bit of the town's mind about the town pump—you've got no energy among you, all you boys. I mean to be at it though, till the new one's built, if it takes me twenty years, and I daresay it will: it took me ten to get the free library, but I got it—I oughtn't to grudge twice the time to get what's of twice the consequence to ten times the number. Which way shall you be going? If you're anywhere near Westminster about dinner-time, I shall be glad of your company.'

'I have to go to the Bank of England.'

'What—to my old shop? I haven't been in Threadneedle-street these forty years. But I believe I should go as straight to my old desk as if it had been yesterday. Yes—I was a paying-clerk there in the old times. If you go through the door in the left-hand corner of the court, you'll see where I used to stand; and if you've got anything to be cashed—and I hope it's a good big something—my great-great-great-great-grandson in office will cash it for you. By Jupiter, sir, I wonder when I think of it if a bank-desk doesn't feel itself to be the real body and soul of the whole thing, and the clerk behind it only a pair of hands that

it gets new from time to time. It's a fact that some desks are lucky and some unlucky, and that some go right and some go wrong. There's some that a young man gets promotion from as sure as he stands there, and some that keep the same man for ever, as if he was a barnacle on a ship's side. We used to notice it, in my time—mine was always an easy-going sort of a desk: I wouldn't mind laying a wager that the clerk at it now is an honest sort of easy-going man.'

'That's a curious theory, Mr. Deacon.'

'It isn't a theory at all—it's a fact, sir. Of course there are exceptions. Now the desk next to me was one of the downright unlucky ones. Bad in every way. I knew both the clerks there in my time—that of course; but I mean I knew rather more of them than anybody. The desk on the other side was a lucky one; men went up high in the Bank from it, as if it was a step in a ladder. Mine was betwixt and between, both in place and in luck; and all the better for me, say I. But about that unlucky desk.' He settled himself back, stretched out his legs, and made ready for the inevitable anecdote of his younger days. 'Of course you've heard all about the White Lady of Threadneedle-street?' said he.

'I fancy I've read something of her—but that's all.'

'Then I'll tell you. When I first stood at the Bank counter, my left-hand neighbour—on the unlucky side—was a young fellow of the name of Frederick Hawes: Fred Hawes, we used to call him, for he was one of them that are made to be Bobbed and Jacked and Fredded by all the world. He was a fine jolly young chap, with any quantity of spirit in him; we all liked him, and two or three

of us, who got to know him best, liked his sister too, Nancy Hawes. She was a prettier girl than I've seen these fifty years; since the time when pretty girls went out and ugly bonnets came in. She and her brother Fred lived with an old aunt in Finsbury—in Windmill-street it was—and I've had tea there with aunt Polly scores of times, and punch there with Fred scores of times more. Poor Fred—poor Nancy! She helped out the housekeeping by doing sewing for an army clothier, and was as good as gold, and fonder of her brother than any girl I ever knew. She just sewed her fingers to the bone to keep him more like a fine gentleman than he'd any right to be, and she'd have cut off her head to please him. I'm not talking about the fine bankers' clerks of nowadays; I'm talking of things more than sixty years ago, when I was five-and-twenty, and so was King George. I believe six of us asked her to marry us six times a piece—I did, I know. But she laughed at us all round, and made us better friends with her than ever. "Brother Fred must marry first," she used to say; and we knew she meant it—she didn't think there was a man fit to clean Fred's shoes. From which, Mr. Wilson, you will doubtless surmise that Master Fred's shoes weren't worth blacking. For, take my word for it, sir, the way to make a sweetheart or a sister or a mother worship the ground you tread on is to be a silly young scamp, without the head of a sparrow-grass or the heart of a cabbage.'

'I hope not,' said I.

'I know it,' said Mr. Deacon. 'But there was one of our set that didn't take No like the rest of us. Isaac Ayscough was his name. He was older and closer than the rest, and the only one that never talked about Miss Nancy. And some-

how, he was the only one with whom she never seemed to be easy or friendly. I know now, putting this and that together, and having near ninety years' knowledge of the world, that he loved her with all his soul, and that she knew it, and that it made her think of him—half frightened and half pleased—so that she couldn't laugh and chat as she did with us others. We all looked up to him. He was not only older, but he was cleverer, and better at business and pleasure, and stronger-willed and harder-headed (and harder-hearted, may be), and could drink more punch and spend more money. I fancy, too, he was of better birth; but of that I'm not sure. Any way, as time went on, there seemed to come a kind of breach among us all—poor Nancy got less cheerful, and Fred less sociable, and at the same time more intimate with Ayscough, until we others hardly saw anything of any of them. Fred was always sweet and friendly with me, all the same, when we met—which of course was every day from ten to three; and often I used to think he wanted to tell me something, but didn't dare, though I encouraged him all in my power. And all the while he was with Ayscough more and more. I once spoke to Nancy about it—but she only cried, and “I *hate* Isaac Ayscough!” said she. I knew that she knew that Ayscough was leading poor Fred wrong, though nobody could tell how; and I know now that Ayscough was working in some villainous underhand way to get Fred into trouble, so that he might get Nancy into his power. Any way, God forgive me if I'm wrong. . . . Well, sir, one day it came out—it was in the year '69, just when the news came of the Boston riots—how a signature had been forged to a transfer warrant; and then—

‘Hawes and Ayscough were the forgers?’

‘I don't know, sir. I only know that Isaac Ayscough discovered the forgery, and that Fred Hawes was—Hanged. In 1769.’

‘Hanged?’

‘Why not? They hadn't made it transportation then. Why I can remember when three hundred and fifty-two men and women were sentenced to be hanged for forgeries on the Bank of England in one single year—all but one a day. What was one more? No, sir—Threadneedle-street isn't what it used to be in my time. But I was telling you of that desk, Mr. Wilson. I don't believe Ayscough meant poor Fred Hawes to be hanged. I'm not sure that Fred—mind, I say *Fred*—committed the forgery. But when a man once puts his shoulders to send one of the devil's stones down hill, down to the bottom goes the stone, and wishing can't stop it. I won't go so far as to think, out loud, that Ayscough found it needful to get the brother out of the way—say in gaol—that he might get hold of the sister. I won't suggest that he did what he found needful. But, all the same, he was a close, masterful, passionate man; and if I say what I *don't* think is true, then I do say that the Bank of England has been the scene of one of the bloodiest sins ever dealt with by the gallows.’

‘And the girl?’

‘Ah, poor Nancy! That's the worst part of it all; unless madness is a better thing than becoming the mistress of a murderer. The day after the hanging, when Ayscough was just leaving his desk—no doubt for Windmill-street—in walks poor Nancy, dressed all in white as if for a wedding, and goes straight up to Ayscough, and asks him sweetly, ‘Is my brother, Mr. Frederick, here to-

day? Ayscough didn't answer her. But though I was ready to break down at the sight, I saw how things were, and that she was thenceforth wholly in God's hands, and said, just as quietly as if nothing had happened, and as if I'd never seen her before, 'No, Miss—not to-day.' And so it went on, day after day, week after week, year after year. Every day, at twelve o'clock noon, she used to cross the Rotunda to Ayscough's desk at the pay-counter, and ask, 'Is my brother, Mr. Frederick, here to-day?' And one of the clerks always used to answer, 'No, Miss—not to-day.' And then she always said, 'Give my love to him when he returns, and say I'll call to-morrow.' Poor thing! She was harmless, and never came to any harm; and some of us helped her aunt to keep her. But one to-morrow she didn't come. And then she was buried—poor girl! If Ayscough wanted her, there's no doubt but he went too far. Yes, sir, the Bank of England *has* been the scene of the foulest and bloodiest sin that ever was *not* dealt with by the gallows!

'And Ayscough? What of him?'

'I never spoke to him after, and he never spoke to me. By a queer chance, he'd been at the lucky desk before; after Fred's death he was shifted to the unlucky one, where Fred had been. I suppose he didn't like to make any objection. We stood side by side, paying cash over the counter for many years, without exchanging a word. I noticed it was the same between him and the clerk on the other side of him. He didn't rise. For twenty-five years he kept on standing there, while everybody left or went over his head, till the old story was forgotten, and he had neighbours who spoke to him. At fifty he had become a strange, solitary, friend-

less old man. He was punctual in all his duties; he turned into a sort of machine. At ten he came to his desk. At one he ate three biscuits of the same size and kind. When he left the Bank he went to a queer, out-of-the-way chop-house, where he always ate two chops and drank two pints of port one after the other. At nine in the evening he went out of sight, and nobody knew what became of him till ten o'clock next day. And at last *he* died, without warning, in a little lodging in Hackney. That was the life, sir, of Isaac Ayscough, whom we all thought destined to set the Thames on fire and to be a great man—and all because he went from one desk to another. While here am I, who never had one-tenth of his brains, alive and jolly at near ninety years old, without one day of my life that I wouldn't have the living of over again—except that I'd put the pump before the library. But here's our journey's end. Good-day, Mr. Wilson, and thank you for your company.'

III.

THE wholesome bustle of the streets soon drove this rather ghastly reminiscence of old Mr. Deacon's youth, which had entered at one ear, out at the other. Though I had spent the greater part of my grown-up life in London, I was not familiar with the City; and I took a certain sort of fanciful pleasure that I, too, was for the day a small cog-wheel in the perpetual machine for making money change hands. Strength of heart and strength of limb seemed stirred up in me by the noise and the two meeting crowds. I felt myself a rich man; and if I built airy castles rather Alnaschar-wise, I really possessed a solid

foundation for at any rate a very comfortable cottage on firm ground.

And so there stood the Bank of England, waiting, without a question, to pay over a thousand of its pounds into my hands. I entered the outer court, and was duly directed by a gorgeous beadle in black and scarlet to the first door in the left-hand corner. I found myself in a large office—which I have no doubt is well known to the greater number of my readers—with twelve desks ranged alphabetically and facing a quiet courtyard filled with trees and shrubs, in the centre of which a fountain plashed lazily. I had expected that in this true heart of the City the bustle of the streets would have been doubled. But an almost monastic stillness, through which the ticking of the clock could be heard plainly, made the presentation of my cheque at one of the central desks feel like part of an impressive ceremonial. I went to one of the windows in front of the desks, and looked out at the as yet flowerless rhododendrons which a very slightly exaggerated sentiment might liken to a soul of flowers within a heart of gold. I took up a pen, and wrote on the back of the cheque 'Andrew Wilson.' Then I stood for a moment or two, hesitating as to which of the desks marked 'G—O' should honour the cheque of Julius Mendez.

Presently, by some slight chance or other, my eyes met those of a clerk standing behind the counter, who, seeming to notice my hesitation, beckoned to me with his eyes or with his hand—with which, I can hardly say. There were two clerks at his desk: one, in the middle, was engaged in making entries, and did not seem to notice me; the clerk whose attention I had caught was standing a little behind the other's left shoulder,

but still close to the counter. The first time that a poor man goes to cash a fortune, he notices every little thing as a part of the history of an adventure. But there were other reasons why I, or anybody of an observant turn, should notice the clerk who had beckoned me towards him. He certainly did not look likely to go out of his way to be polite to anybody.

He was a shrivelled, withered old man, who in appearance, though probably not in years, might have been the father of Mr. Deacon. It is necessary for me to describe him, though he was nothing to me save in his capacity of an automaton for paying me a thousand pounds on demand. But, as I have said, under such circumstances as mine, one takes note of everything. And yet I don't know that I should have observed him at all had it not been for the very obtrusivesingularity of his costume. It was very odd that a Bank clerk, however old, should still persist in dressing himself after the fashion of his grandfather when his grandfather was a young man. He wore a snuff-coloured coat of quaker cut, with huge flapped pockets in the skirts; a flower-patterned silk waistcoat, over which a gold watchguard ran upwards from a fob; and his neck was swathed in at least a dozen folds of snow-white cambric, starched and frilled. Unless he muffled himself up in the largest and loosest of greatcoats when he left the Bank, I would not give much for his chance of not being followed by a long train of small boys. The lower part of his person was hidden by the counter; but in such wise, as to their superior parts, must those have been clothed to whom came, in 1769, the news to which Mr. Deacon had alluded of the riots in Boston. But the eye soon shifted from the clothes to the

face and figure of the man who wore them.

It was simply the most hideous, ghastly face I had ever seen in a human being. In some ways it is indescribable; but for that very reason I must try to describe it as best I can. Hideous and ghastly as it was, the features were not ill formed—it is not impossible that they might have been regularly handsome once upon a time; only it must have been a long time ago. The contour of cheeks and chin was oval, the nose straight, and the eyes of a rich hazel; the brow was square and full. But the lips had shrivelled up into a parchment-like substance that stretched back so as to display two rows of broken black fangs. The skin of the face had aged into the semblance of badly stretched leather, through which the bones seemed bursting their way. The complexion was of a thin corpse-like gray, which ought to signify some strange disease, but which to my eyes looked as if the hand, not of any disease, but of Death itself, had passed over it and left a shadow. The cheeks had grown so hollow as to have become lost in the jaws. A thin circle of hair just prevented the wrinkled scalp from being wholly bald; the dark eyes were sunk in deep cup-like cavities; the nasal cartilage was of a livid blue. The man's head seemed to be degenerating, before death, into the skull of a living skeleton. But, ghastly as all this was, it was not all.

There was expression. I do not profess any especial skill in physiognomy; but some faces are to be read by a child without any chance of error, even if what they tell has been hitherto unfamiliar. This was the face of a living man who had died in sin—who had literally died, and yet who still lived on. I have said that, in some

ways, it is indescribable. This is what I meant; and I can describe it, or rather its effect, in no other way. Even while it beckoned me with what, after the first moment, I could only call an obsequious grin, it was filled with a glow, not of remorse, which is for the living, but of that final despair which is for the dead alone. Even so would a corpse look which had murdered not only bodies, but brains, hearts, and souls. Even so would such eyes look as are the phantom windows of some soul in hell. I am not exaggerating. I have called this one of those faces which are absolutely plain to read; and to see such a face, and such a figure so costumed, behind a Bank counter, was startling enough to make every least detail of expression fix itself in the memory.

The sunken, hungry, desperate, deadly eyes looked like the reservoirs of the fire by which the flesh of the body was being slowly consumed. The clothes hung loosely, as if they had been made for a much taller and stouter wearer. To judge of the rest by the head, they might have covered a corpse half way on the road to being a skeleton, which the grave-worms had already half devoured. Every now and then a livid flush flitted over the ashiness of the gray. How the well-dressed young clerk at the middle of the desk could bear to have such a suggestive incarnation of deadly sin unrepented of, but self-devouring, at his elbow, I could not understand. I had only time to notice two more details when the eyes attracted me again with a look of unutterable famine.

The first was a very remarkable scar, something in the shape of the letter Y—the stem descending down the left cheek, one limb branching diagonally across the forehead, and the other stretching

nearly to the highest point of the ear. The colour of this scar was of a reddish purple. The second note was of dress only. It was a brooch used to fasten the voluminous cambric neckcloth, made of gold, and of a fashion such as I have never seen elsewhere. An oblong frame, slightly convex, and set all round with small seed-pearls, held a glass in the place of a stone; under the glass was a twisted lock of reddish-brown hair, fastened with a true-lover's knot of pearls like those in the setting, and with an 'A' on one side, in like pearls, and an 'H' on the other.

I should certainly have chosen to receive my cash from the other clerk; but he was busy at the moment making his entries, and presently my cheque was in the thin dead-white fingers of the strange and evil-looking cashier who had attracted me. Surely, I thought, appearances must be indeed deceitful if fingers belonging to such a fiendish face as that are trusted by the Corporation of the Bank of England.

'How will you take it?' asked he, in a hoarse vague voice, without any strength or tone. 'Short or long?'

I never heard even a dying voice at the last gasp express such utter abandonment to weariness of being. Before I could answer such a mere routine question, I had to pass my hand over my eyes to make sure I was not looking at, and listening to, a figure in a dream, or rather in a nightmare. The reason was that, in a dream, one hears with the inner ear only; and it was so that I seemed to hear this man's 'How will you take it? Short or long?'

But it was certainly not a dream. With my outer ears I heard the ticking of the clock and the scratching of many quills. My hand was

still passing over my closed eyes while I answered, 'I will take it in one note, if you please.'

I heard a slight crisp rustle. I opened my eyes dreamily; they fell upon a clean bank-note lying before me at the edge of the counter. The very repulsion I felt drew me to look up from the note to the cashier; but he had left the desk; and the same feeling of repulsion which had forced my eyes to his while he was standing close to me kept them from following him now that he was gone.

But the other clerk, at the centre of the desk, was still at his place; and I fancied that, while I took up my note, he eyed me rather curiously. He had no doubt, however, been too much absorbed in his entries to notice that my business was already done; at any rate he half held out his hand as if to attend to me. 'Thank you; I have been attended to,' said I; and he, having looked round him as well as at me a little oddly and absently, returned to the books before him. I took out my pocket-book, and began to fold up the note to stow it away safely in one of the divisions. As I did so, the note seemed to double of itself cross-ways, as if it had been already slightly creased in one direction; but I was too completely unversed in the routine of the Bank of England to take any special heed of so seemingly slight, and to me so meaningless, a circumstance just then. But most certainly while I had to bring it into a new fold one way, it seemed to fall crossways into a natural fold; and that is a great deal more singular than it sounds, as anybody who is fortunate enough to possess the materials may learn by experiment, so long as he is sure that the notes he experiments with are new.

But—well, after all, the whole transaction came simply to this: that my cheque had been duly paid by a very singular-looking man, to whom I should have very decidedly objected in the capacity of a fellow-clerk, but whose fingers were fully as good to receive a thousand pounds from as if they had been less like a dead man's. I did not go to Westminster to lunch with Deacon, but took the return coach home. I had left D—— with scarcely more than my fare; I returned to it a rich man.

IV.

My castles proved remarkably well built, considering that they had been built so largely with the bricks of Alnaschar. My change of circumstances soon became known in D——, and it was certainly no fault of mine that my sudden stroke of good luck became considerably exaggerated by popular rumour. It never rains, but it pours; and the saying holds especially true of golden showers. By a piece of really good fortune I became able to step into a vacant practice in D—— itself, on very easy terms, and within only a very few months out of the twelve I had allowed for looking about me. The practice was fairly good to start with, and it grew rapidly, helped at the very outset by two or three strikingly fortunate cures. My health began to come back at magical pace, and everything seemed destined to go on well, thanks to my West Indian patient, to whom I wrote once more, but from whom I never heard again. He was evidently one of those people who are ashamed of doing things that make people feel grateful. I found myself doing so well that I trusted in a year or two to

be able to ask Mr. Mendez to do me the farther favour of letting me send him back what he had advanced me as the repayment of a loan. That I had never really earned so large a fee was the only thing I had on my mind, and that was certainly not a heavy load. As for Annie, all her life was turning back into its natural happiness; and the child was thriving as well as even she could desire. Tom, too, was getting on in his slow and steady way; and the brothers and sisters were being drawn together again, thanks to my gleam of West Indian sunshine. I don't think that Annie and I were labelled lunatics any more.

In speaking of my good old friend Mr. Deacon I ought to have said, or at least I might have said, that he had two sons in the town, both middle-aged men; one was a lawyer, the other was the manager of the branch bank where I had opened my account with my first thousand pounds. The lawyer was Mr. Robert, the bank-manager was Mr. William, and both were very good friends of mine. One afternoon when I happened to be at the bank, Mr. William asked to see me in his private room. I naturally thought it would turn out to be a matter of very ordinary business of either medicine or money; and as he had a natural stiffness of manner very different from his father's, I noticed nothing unusual in his way of receiving me. He had another visitor in the room, who was a stranger to me.

'Wilson,' he said, 'you remember opening your account with us last May?'

'Of course I do.'

'You paid in a single Bank of England note? Should you know it if you saw it again?'

'I indorsed it with my name.'

'And when we received it from

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you we entered the number and particulars. Look here.'

'Yes, that is my name; so I suppose that is my old friend.'

'Your name, in your own handwriting?'

'Certainly; I'm not likely to forget every pen-stroke I made in *that* signature. I hope there's nothing wrong.'

'We paid it to a customer of ours who was borrowing money from us on a mortgage; from him it passed back to the Bank of England. There are some reasons that make the Bank of England people a little curious as to its history, and this gentleman here has come down to make inquiry; perhaps you can help him. How long ago did *you* receive this note, and from whom?'

'On the 10th of May. I received it at the Bank of England itself, over the counter.'

The two gentlemen looked at one another.

'You say,' said the stranger, 'that you, on the 10th of May last, received over the counter of the Bank of England this note, any note, of this particular date and number? Is that so? Is that what you say?'

'Certainly. Why not?' asked I.

'Do I understand you would swear it in a court of justice, if need were?'

'I hope there is nothing wrong. But I would certainly swear to that anywhere.'

'And I also hope there is nothing wrong. But there is certainly something very strange. On what account was this note paid into your hands?'

'In payment of a cheque, drawn in my favour by Mr. Julius Mendez of Kingston, Jamaica.'

'To order or to bearer?'

'To order.'

'Can you give me the date of the cheque?'

'The 12th of September last.'

CHRISTMAS, '79.

'You are sure of that?'

'Absolutely sure. But I suppose, if the date is of consequence, you can write to Mr. Mendez, or telegraph to him?'

'Mr. Mendez—' began Mr. Deacon; but the gentleman from the Bank interrupted him:

'You think—that is to say, you would advise us to communicate with Mr. Mendez? Yes; no doubt we can send him a message, if we please. So I understand your account is that you received this identical note over the counter of the Bank of England in payment of a cheque drawn to your order by Mr. Mendez, and dated the 12th of September; and that you received the note on the 10th of May. Is that so? And that you say you are ready to swear? Then in that case I need not detain you longer, or Mr. Deacon. Good-day.'

'What does it all mean?' I asked Mr. William Deacon, as soon as the other had gone. 'I hope you are not in any trouble about that note? I don't know yet much about banking, you know.'

'I hope,' he said, 'that nobody will be in any trouble; but I have told all I know about the matter, and so have you. I daresay we shall not hear of the matter again. Will you excuse me? I'm very busy just now, and—'

For perhaps five minutes, till I reached the door of my next patient, I wondered what circumstances could possibly be connected with this note that should lead the Bank of England to send an official down to D—— to make inquiries, and hoped that, whatever they might be, I should not be troubled with a subpoena. But by the time I reached my immediate destination the whole thing had passed from my mind, with a wish, as idle as it was slight, that I had taken the note from the hands of some

less strange-looking cashier than he whose appearance of half-wasting corpse, half-wasted skeleton, whole sin-eaten soul, had engraved themselves on my memory, and even now and then returned as a personage in some disagreeable dream when my nerves, not yet wholly strong, chanced to become a little overstrained.

I saw my patients as usual, made some purchases in view of approaching Christmas, and then went home, with my mind as free from any sort of anxiety as a mind can be. And, if I had felt anxious, as unbusiness-like people are apt to feel about business matters, I could have discovered no sort of tangible reason. The cheque had been duly honoured, and the Bank of England could not surely find any fault with a note issued from its own counter. I practically forgot the conversation in Mr. William Deacon's room so completely as not to remember to tell Annie, though I have always told her whatever I remembered to tell her. I remember that we passed a particularly pleasant and happy evening together.

The following afternoon I was in the cell of a London police-station. Within a week I had given bail to meet my trial on an indictment for having forged and uttered a note of the Bank of England for one thousand pounds.

V.

I PASS over the history of that week. I have spoken enough of my mere self; and it is not my purpose, in writing this plain account of a strange affair, to describe the effect of a sudden and unexpected charge of serious crime brought all at once upon a man who thought he had left the worst struggles of life behind him, who

was fortunate in all his outward conditions of life and work, and whose happiness in the inner life of home was growing day by day. Such sudden downfalls require no help for the imagination to realise them better without words than with them. I don't know that a consciousness of innocence, though so complete as to amount to ignorance, is much comfort in such cases. The guilty man has a comfort forbidden to the innocent—the consciousness that he is being treated justly, and the relief of being no longer compelled to live a lie. I had the one great comfort of Annie's inexhaustible love and trust; but then, had I been guilty, I should have had this all the same.

I have said that I had found bail, old Mr. Deacon being one of my sureties, partly out of friendship, but partly, I have no doubt, thanks to his overflowing energy, which compelled him to mix himself up actively with the affairs of everybody. Mr. Robert Deacon acted as my legal adviser; he was a shrewd, careful lawyer, but the case puzzled him as much as it baffled me. Whether he believed me guilty, I know not; but if he did not, he was more credulous than even I should have been.

The case was this. It has always been the practice of the Bank of England never to reissue a note, but to burn every note that returns to it; visitors to the Bank may have been shown, by way of curiosity, a charred mass consisting of the ashes of millions of pounds. Now on a certain day a note for 1000*l.*, bearing a certain number and other marks of identification, had, in the usual course of business, been returned to the Bank and duly burned with others. Of that there could be no question, unless there had been a conspiracy among many officials to save it from the fire. Some time afterwards a sur-

geon without practice, known by all who knew anything of him to be in a state of destitution, and as much without prospects as means, paid into the bank at D—— a note corresponding in every recorded particular with the note which had been destroyed. My antecedents were very far from being in my favour, at any rate unless Mr. Mendez could be brought from Jamaica to confirm, partially, my own account of some part of them. I had, till within a few weeks of paying in the note, been wholly lost sight of by my own family. It is true I could say that I had been nearly dying of yellow fever in Jamaica; but that would have to be proved, and proof would take time, and might be difficult, and would probably be immaterial. A man may find time, during a long disappearance, for other pursuits than yellow fever, though of the same colour. I had come back as poor as I went away—apparently, that is to say. And then suddenly I opened a banking account with that note; my own account of the transaction consisting of such suppressions of truth and of such obvious lies as only to prove how completely a rogue may overreach himself, if he leaves himself a loophole to make a single blunder.

On my own showing, I had said nothing of any receipt of money—though living in the same house with a brother-in-law who knew all my circumstances—except to my wife, who was debarred by law from giving evidence in my favour. The letter in which the cheque (as I alleged) had reached me had not passed through the D—— post-office, but, according to my story, had been lost sight of for months, and had only been discovered accidentally. The whole story was in itself very suspiciously lame, even so far.

But the rest looked—fatal. I

was not content with declaring that I had received a re-issued note from the Bank of England. I declared I had received it in payment of a cheque drawn on the 12th of September. And, to sum up all, the Bank had been long ago notified that its customer, Mr. Julius Mendez of Kingston, had been *accidentally drowned in Kingston Harbour on September 11th—the very day after I had left him to the enjoyment of a new lease of life for forty years.* And his cheque-book, containing the counterfoils, had been lost with him; and no evidence remained of his having drawn any such cheque save his letter to me—if it had not been written *by me.* The wholesome practice (which a forger learned the other day to his cost) had not then generally obtained among foreign customers of privately notifying the Bank of cheques drawn by them; at any rate it had not been observed by Mr. Julius Mendez.

And so much for Mr. Julius Mendez, his hopes and his fears! The man who had nothing to dread, save a death by disease on or before a certain Saturday, had perished by misadventure on the following Sunday. Perhaps he had mistaken his fifty-seventh birthday; perhaps not: but who can tell? At any rate there must have been some mistake—somewhere.

But his mistake was a terrible misadventure for me. Nothing but the nature of Mr. Robert Deacon's defence for me—that no official or expert could detect the slightest sign or symptom of forgery on the face of the note—warranted my admission to bail upon so serious a charge as forgery upon the Bank of England, which had been a hanging matter till within only a very few years

before. I don't know whether I have even yet made clear the whole gravity of the charge. It was not a mere question whether a country doctor should be sent to Botany Bay. The question reached far beyond the bearings of the criminal law—it affected the whole machinery of the Bank of England. I have no doubt that many secret courts of inquiry were held in Threadneedle-street before and after my arrest—which was most surely called for. Was it possible, in spite of the perfection to which the manufacture of notes had been carried even then, that a mere amateur should be able to copy one of them so perfectly as to deceive the most expert eyes? Or, worse still, was foul play at work among the most trusted servants and officers of the Bank of England—was there a vast conspiracy whose ramifications must necessarily include many officials in the highest places? My lies might prove my personal guilt; but the nature of the note, assuming its forged character, seemed to disprove the possibility of my being solely responsible. I have mentioned the keynote of my defence. But, when once struck, nothing could prevent its coming to this: that I had presented a cheque which had been suppressed or forged in order that an old note, stolen from the furnace, might be put into my hands, as part and parcel of some system of fraud or plunder the nature of which was as yet beyond guessing. That a note of the same amount had been given, on the 10th of May, in payment of a cheque drawn by Mr. Mendez appeared, from the books, to be clear; but it was of a different number, and had not yet returned. But this only made the whole matter more alarming in the labyrinth of suspicion which it threw open.

If any one of my readers chances to be acquainted with any Bank official whose position or age should naturally imply some recollection of these matters, he may—perhaps—learn more of the details of these inquiries than I can possibly tell him. But it is far more likely that the more is remembered, the less will be told. I know that for my own part I should not like to ask any such questions, unless I wanted to be answered by a snub or a jest according to the character of him whom I ventured to question. Banks should be, and are, confessionals; and unless some outsider like myself, who is bound by no confidential duties, tells what he knows, the psychology of gold must remain an unexplored field for ever.

The nature of my defence, and what it must needs lead to, although set up by his son, horrified old Mr. Deacon. He had for the Bank of England, only in an intensified form, the feeling that other men have for their old regiments and colleges—he did not believe in my guilt, because he believed in Annie; but his son's defence was like a sacrilegious attempt to upset the world. 'There have been forgers enough,' he said, 'especially when they used to be hanged, and there have been bank-clerks among them now and then, and they were *always* hanged. But I'll sooner believe that Mrs. Wilson, there, herself, forged a thousand-pound note with her own hands, than that the "Old Lady" isn't everything she ought to be. I must be a good deal older than I am yet before I take to putting the old times before the new; and I'll find out the whole thing myself, if I have to put off the pump twenty years more.'

But it seemed unlikely that he would find out anything for me or against me, if for Annie's sake or

for the Bank's he put off the pump for another century. I need not tell the nature of the cloud that came over me at D—— while I was waiting to be tried. Pride and prudence combined forbade me to leave the place, even though all but the very poorest patients refused the prescriptions of a medical man who would soon be a slave in Botany Bay. I made a point of being seen about in the streets, and held my head up very high; but I felt the cloud over us all, and how near it was to breaking into a final and crushing storm. Perhaps my need to be brave for Annie's sake obliged me to show more courage than I felt; but it was only the courage of the ostrich, after all. Of what other sort could it be in those days? In a few short weeks, she and the boy would be the wife and child of a convicted felon; and what end would that mean, for them? I am bound to tell my story plainly. It is the only way in which such stories can ever be told.

The first that I heard of any secret inquiry was a communication from Mr. Robert Deacon that the Bank would give me all facilities for identifying the clerk who had, according to my story, cashed my alleged cheque, if I thought fit to use them. The point had given rise to a great many questions on both sides. But at last it was arranged that I should try the experiment—indeed I should have to do it sooner or later, and I was convinced that I could as certainly put my finger on the clerk who had given me the note as upon the note he had given.

I believe it had been ascertained what clerks had been at the desks at the paying counter on the day in question. At any rate, in company with my solicitor and with old Mr. Deacon, I once more travelled to London, and then left

them in one of the private offices while I walked the length of the counter. All was just as I had seen it before. I went to the same writing desk in the same window, that I might place myself in precisely the same circumstances as before, listened for a moment to the same ticking and scratching, and then turned round, just as some clock outside struck the first stroke of noon. I noticed it at the moment as a coincidence (though certainly not as a curious one) that the hour was the same, to a stroke, as when I had just finished indorsing my cheque on that 10th of May.

I saw twelve clerks at twelve desks; but the Thirteenth, for whom I was looking, I did *not* see. I hardly knew whether to feel uneasy or relieved. To have seen him might have had the effect of relieving me from my own peril; but, on the other hand, I almost shuddered at the thought of seeing again that ghastly face of hopeless evil behind the shoulder of the clerk who had looked at me so curiously after my receipt of the money. No—certainly he was not at the counter, nor was he to be seen in the room, though my eyes went all over it, from desk to desk, in search of him. And yet I had been assured that *every* clerk present on that 10th of May was present now—that none had died or left the Bank, and that those who had changed situations in it had been sent back to their old desks for to-day. I could not suspect the directors of the Bank of England or their advisers of conspiracy to shield their system or their officers—my own liberty was hardly more important to myself than the necessity of probing the whole mystery to the bottom was to them. I no longer dreaded to meet that clerk's face now. I waited minute after minute, get-

ting feverish with eagerness to find him, until, almost for a whole moment, I even fancied that I caught sight of him in the air. But that was only an instant's transparent illusion, born of anxiety. There was no use in lengthening our suspense—he was *not* there.

'Well?' asked Mr. Allen, the director present at the interview.

'I can only say that I have not seen him,' I could but answer, while I felt my heart sink in me. I knew what sort of look passed between Mr. Allen, and Mr. Ash the lawyer, and Mr. Brown from the office of the Chief Cashier. And I knew it would have been shared by my own lawyer, had he not been representing me; and by myself, had I been sitting in judgment on another man.

'No: I have not seen him—to-day,' I went on, after full time for that look, and more. 'And I know what my not having seen him means—to me. But nevertheless he was there, at that desk, on that 10th of May; and he cashed that cheque with that bank-note as surely as I am a living man. In that one thing I cannot forget, I cannot even be mistaken, in what I saw with my own eyes. I don't expect you to believe me. But I cannot help believing myself; and it is true.'

'Well,' said Mr. Allen, 'we have now done all that we met for; there is nothing more to be said, that I can see. Mr. Deacon,' he said, turning to my solicitor, 'you are satisfied that we have given Mr. Wilson every opportunity for identifying the clerk who paid him that note. He says that he received it from a clerk who never even existed. Have you anything to say?'

Mr. Robert Deacon shrugged his shoulders—a little diplomatically, I am afraid. 'Only that Mr. Wilson has failed to remember one

bank-clerk from another; nothing more. Many people remember faces badly—we don't rest our defence on my client's memory, you know.'

'But I do!' I could not help exclaiming, heedless of the look of angry warning that my lawyer threw me—surely I had committed myself to lies enough already without adding any more to the pile; and, as is well known, a prisoner who talks is the leading counsel for the crown. 'It is because I remember the man that I say he did pay me that note, and that I say now he is not there. If I did not remember him, I should say that, though I do not recognise him, he may be there. There are some faces that the worst memory cannot lose—his is one.'

'Perhaps Mr. Wilson can describe him?' asked Mr. Allen.

'Certainly not!' said Mr. Robert Deacon. 'Whatever he has to say his counsel will say for him at the right place and time. But this is not a court, and no one here has a right to ask questions—as Mr. Ash will tell you.'

'I *can* describe him,' I said; 'and, since this is not a court, I have a right to speak—and I will. He—that clerk—'

'Do you understand that I throw up your case,' whispered Mr. Robert Deacon sharply, 'if you say one word?'

'So be it,' said I. 'Since there was such a man, my description will find him. For aught I know the note may be forged, but not the man. Every detail of my whole story is true, from beginning to end; and I will answer everything, if it were to hang me. I can describe the clerk who cashed the cheque with that note as exactly as if I had seen him a hundred times. He was a short, bent, shrivelled, elderly man of at least fifty; but he may be sixty, or

more. He was quite bald, fearfully pale, and looking almost fleshless: he had an ashy, sallow, partly livid complexion, and dark deep-set eyes. It was a face never to be forgotten, if only seen once and never again. He wore a snuff-coloured quaker coat with large pockets, and a waistcoat of flowered silk, and he had many yards of frilled cambric round his neck, in the style, I should think, of at least seventy years ago. If such a man has ever been in the Bank of England—and I know there was such a man here at twelve o'clock on the 10th of May—he can easily be found.'

'I should say most decidedly that he could be found,' said Mr. Allen.

'And I should say most decidedly that he can *not* be found,' said Mr. Brown. 'And for the very obvious reason that there is no such clerk here.'

'But there was at twelve o'clock on the 10th of May,' said I. 'You cannot convince me that I have not seen what I *have* seen. I tell you he was a man whom no living eyes could forget. He looks like a living corpse—a corpse buried in its clothes seventy years ago, and unable to rest in its grave. No; I cannot be wrong. I noted every detail of face and costume. I can even tell you more. His face was marked by a large scar, running almost from the ear to the centre of the forehead and across the cheek-bone. His cravat was fastened by a curious old brooch with a setting of seed pearls, containing a lock of reddish-brown hair, fastened by a lover's knot in pearls, between the letters A and H. He—'

'Good God!' cried out old Mr. Deacon, hitherto silent, with the whole power of a voice that made the windows rattle. 'Good God! He's seen old Ayscough! . . . He's

seen the living Corpse of Isaac Ayscough as sure as I'm a living man near ninety years old! Haven't you ever heard, Mr. Allen—and you, Mr. Brown—that the Ghost of Isaac Ayscough, that hanged Fred Hawes sixty years ago, is always at a clerk's elbow when he cashes the cheque of a Dead Man? That always used to be the story, as younger men than I am will tell you, ever since the old scoundrel cheated the gallows and went—where hanging would be mercy. I've seen that brooch, and I've seen *him*, every day for twenty years—and that's He! . . . A. H—it's the hair of Nancy Hawes, poor girl! . . . The doctor has seen old Isaac Ayscough, who's paid with the Ghost of a burnt bank-note the cheque of a Dead Man!'

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VI.

I am now nearly as old as old Mr. Deacon was then; and I am writing, or rather remembering, this strange chapter of my life in my own quiet study, in the quiet town which has been the scene of my life and my work ever since I came home from Jamaica, and where Annie and I kept our golden wedding—made of better gold than all in the Bank of England—years ago. I shall presently make an end of my story, in my own way. But first I must state one fact, which may possibly help the reader to a different reading of it than old Mr. Deacon's, though, as I shall show presently, it never satisfied him, and does not satisfy me.

The fact was this: when, at ten o'clock on the morning after my failure to see thirteen clerks in the private Drawing-room, the chief cashier opened his letters, he found in one of the envelopes, unaccompanied by any letter, or word, or

any token to show whence or from whom it came, a Bank of England note for one thousand pounds. On comparing its number with the proper entries it was found to be the note which, according to these entries, had been given to me in payment of Mr. Mendez's cheque on the 10th of May.

Now what should this imply? It may now be taken as impossible that any official of the Bank of England, high or low, would if he could, or could if he would, abstract from the notes to be burned on return one or more of them in order that he might, by paying or causing to be paid this old note over the counter, and by entering a new note instead of it, appropriate the new note to his own pocket. But it may certainly be taken that the machinery of the Bank was less absolutely perfect then than now; and it is just possible to suppose such an abstraction of an old note, and such an entry and appropriation of a new one. The old note would have been given to me. The new note would have been entered in place of it, but retained. If the manipulator was low in office and acting alone, he would run no more chances of detection than rogues always run; if high in office, or the instrument of one high in office, detection would be exceptionally difficult, if not impossible, supposing the checks and machineries to have been then imperfect enough to make the original manipulation possible at all. I know not the whole result or course of the farther investigations to which the return of the new note (whether for anonymously getting an innocent man out of an unexpected peril, or for the sake of throwing overboard a dangerous piece of property, or as part and parcel of the scheme, and by way of restoring a balance) gave rise. Whether

the clerk who stood at the unlucky desk suffered alone, or whether any higher official suffered with him, or whether any malpractices were brought to light on the part of anybody, I never learned. But this I do know, that the checks and machinery of the Bank of England have, since these investigations, become in these matters a type and model of absolute perfection; and that, when I surrendered to take my trial, no evidence was offered of my having forged or uttered a note which nobody could say with the least reason had been forged at all. I might have dreamed, I might have lied; but neither dreams nor simple lies are crimes, and I was discharged.

But, as I have said, this way of accounting for the mystery did not satisfy the mind of a man like old Mr. Deacon, who would believe anything rather than that the machinery of the Bank of England was more capable of breaking down at a pinch than that of the Solar System. And I *knew* that I had seen Isaac Ayscough—how else could my eyes, however excited, and my nerves, however highly strung, have imagined one whom I had never seen alive?—and I know it still.

No death-sleep has he, the corpse of the man who murdered his friend by treachery and destroyed the brain of the girl whom he loved with what *he* called love—perhaps, before her brain, her woman's soul. Every day the rotting ghost is drawn, as if by a lodestone, to the desk whereon, in the flesh, it wrote its sin, turned to remorse now. It stood there day after day in the flesh; day after day the sin-corrupted spirit toils there still, at the old place and in the same old way. Perhaps its fingers, scratching ghostly entries, give a flavour of charnel-luck to

the very desk where it stands. But, more than doom enough for it, it cannot escape; it must toil there, and rot on. And what work is there for such a ghost to do?

Enough, surely, and to spare. Such a ghost as this can never be without plenty of customers. If there be ghosts that haunt the scenes of common murder, how much more closely must not ghosts be bound to the scenes of gold and of passion, which are the very roots of murder? If they are bound to places which they loathe, how much more must they not haunt the places which contained the whole of their earthly treasure? Where the ghost of the treasure was, there may one look to find the ghost of the heart also. What is to become of those who never had any soul other than a lump of gold? There is no fitter doom for such than to wander round their grand treasure-house, learning by slow steps the vanity of a treasure which a dead hand cannot hold. The only lesson they are capable of is to spend an age or two in dealing with the mockery, which is the truth, of gold till they learn to hate its very name and ring, till they know how infinitely more precious are moonbeams. Yes, a ghost like Isaac Ayscough must have customers enough, and to spare.

I can see him still, in fancy, as I saw him once in visible fact, receiving what, by the ghostly error of a ghostly clerk, he mistook for a ghostly cheque drawn by a dead man from the hands of one who looked like a ghost, so worn out was I by the shadow of death through which I had so lately gone. The cheque post-dated by a day (according to the habit of some persons) for the sake of avoiding a Sunday had become on its face the draft of a dead man; and if a living man may mistake a phantom

for a fellow-mortal, it should follow that a dead man may mistake a living one for a fellow-phantom. I can still, when I will, see him as I saw him then, paying a dead customer in the ghosts of notes that had become no longer current among living men. Be it remembered that matter, like spirit, never dies. Burn a bank-note as thoroughly as you will, its particles are not destroyed, and may be restored by the process of ghostly cohesion, which, if such a thing be at all, is just as applicable to paper and to engraver's ink as to flesh and bone. A good book lives for ever in its soul, like a good man; a document, which may in its real life have been the cause or instrument of evil, would live on in its body, like an evil man. The body may die, but the corpse may live; the paper may be burned, but the written words are not to be blotted out merely by mankindled fire. Whether such a paper ghost is to be rematerialised by contact with living fingers is a question without an answer, unless my story may be taken in some sort as an answer thereto.

In any case, there, behind the counter over which cheques are paid,—there I know in my inner brain stands the corpse of Isaac Ayscough, in his habit, in his sin, and in his remorse as he lived, honouring with burned bank-notes the cheques of dead men. The live bank-clerk who deals with the living has only, as the clock strikes noon, to turn his head quickly enough to see the hideous and loathsome corpse of Isaac Ayscough at his very elbow. I know not if those livid remnants of lips ever whisper to the inner ears of their living desk-fellow. If so, I doubt if the hearer would ever tell the nature of the whisper which his heart hears, only it must fare ill with him if he be not in all things a true and honest man. If he be

not, such whispers must carry with them the contagion of the wasting and burning flesh whence they come.

But this is a narrative of a fact, not an investigation into theories. I do not think that honesty need fear any desk-fellow, dead or alive. It is for a customer to beware who,

having a cheque to present, catches the evil eye of a dead murderer, and worse than murderer, standing at the counter. By all the signs I have set down he may know himself to be face to face with the Ghost in the Bank of England, whom Lust and Greed will not suffer to sleep in the grave.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES.

CHRISTMAS fires are burning bright,
And the glowing embers fall;
Lines of rosy flickering light
Steal along the dusky wall.

Now is hushed the noise of day
In that fairy magic glow;
Memory takes her silent way
To the land of Long Ago.

Ah me, what sweet visions rise
From that Past that never dies!
Dear, dear faces, loving eyes,
Fill my heart with tearful sighs.

Stay with us, sweet visions, stay;
Never, never pass away;
Through each cloud and sunlit day
Keep your tender watch for aye.

MISS BRIGHTER'S ACADEMY.

A Tale of a West-end Finishing School.

CHAPTER I.

It was a finishing one in every sense of the word ; for it finished off the finances as well as the accomplishments ; it turned out the pockets as fast as the prodigies. A good deal of solid gold passed into the hands of the lady-principal, and was paid back by her in a gloss which might last through a season of folly and fashion, and perchance lead to enamelling later. Still Miss Brighter's academy had touched up some 'gems of girls,' and manufactured, once in a way, a 'jewel of a wife;' so it is not for us to decry the polishing process. As a rule, Belgravian mothers found it to their fancy. Their daughters came back to them drilled and dutiful, with that inane expression of serenity which is indispensable in high life. They were guiltless of a tinge of the vulgar blue, but were supposed to have imbibed delicately of the pink of perfection.

The figure was studied, if figures were not ; a certain art was acquired, if the arts hung behind ; and the girls were trained to draw lovers, if not landscapes.

It was to this graceful seminary that Lady Carinthia Wildleigh confided her hopeless daughter Rosalina. She was very pretty, very winning, but very wilful ; and the defect was one quite inadmissible in the select circle for which she was intended.

'Make her,' said Lady Carinthia, in transferring her to Miss Brighter's hands,—'make her calm, stolid, stupid—anything but demonstrative. I don't know where she came from ; I think she is a

changeling. But however that may be, she must be changed now ;' and with as much emphasis as her aristocratic lips would allow, she swept from the scene with these impressive words.

Miss Brighter smiled benignly. This was something quite in her line, and she rather liked it. If there was a good deal of responsibility, the credit would be all the greater, the profit the higher, and she preferred risk to limited liability. Possibly she was a little adventurous ; but her system had stood well as yet : there was no reason to presage its downfall because of this new investment.

As Lady Carinthia glided off to her carriage, Miss Brighter threw a quiet calculating glance on the young lady who was left. What she saw there did not tend to reassure her. But before proceeding to her impressions, we must give some idea of the lady-principal herself. In person she was stately, erect, elegant ; her attire silken, and her speech smooth. She had very small eyes, but they were bright as beads ; and there was a certain amount of force in the thin lines of her lips and the clearly-cut teeth within. She verged on her fiftieth year, but scarcely looked so much ; for her complexion, habitually pale, and her skin, of a certain parchment texture, had the less to lose by the ravages of time. Her hair, once fair, might have been touched with gray had it not been for the judicious application of some 'restorer,' which imparted to it a yellow tinge, with a slight admixture of green beneath the shadow of her cap. When she walked, her

tread was firm but noiseless ; and except for the soft rustle of her dress, her movements would have been almost too cat-like.

The longer she looked now at Rosalina, the less comfortable she felt. The young lady was tall—that was against her to begin with. Miss Brighter was only conversant with the small type of merry mischievous maidens. This was some-

thing quite abnormal, a new specimen which would require special manipulation. Furthermore she had dark dangerous eyes—not the light laughing orbs associated with pranks and gaiety—and a supercilious little nose. Her hair was raven black ; her features were small but self-asserting, and lips, of the most daring vermilion, parted in a sort of smile when she

spoke which had more defiance in it than a scowl. She had been chattering even while her aristocratic mother was speaking, chattering lightly to a green-and-gray parrot, which eyed her dubiously from between the bars of his cage. Miss Brighter found it necessary to overawe her with a certain sternness of manner, which she did not generally adopt in the opening stages of acquaintanceship.

‘Allow me, Miss Wildleigh, to conduct you to the classroom,’

she said solemnly, and [moved towards the door. ‘You will be under the especial care of Fräulein Liedher ; she will show you your apartment.’

Rosalina said nothing ; she only smiled, but that was enough. Miss Brighter felt a sort of thrill pass through her. But she thought of Lady Carinthia, of her confidence and her own credit, and her courage was up again.

Fräulein Liedher was an active pleasant little body, not young,

but with a juvenile manner and bright air. Rosalina was led up to her in the schoolroom, and passed over promptly to her keeping.

'Pray show Miss Wildleigh her room, Fräulein,' said the lady-principal, after a few words of introduction; 'the one you occupy.'

'I am to have a bedroom to myself,' interposed Rosalina smartly. 'That was arranged for.'

'Certainly. There is no other young lady put with you; but a governess is always in each apartment.'

'O, she counts for nobody, is that it?' said Rosalina, and with one of her sweetest smiles she was marched off.

It was not her way to argue or contend, but simply to render every arrangement which did not suit herself utterly untenable.

That poor Fräulein had a sad time of it. She watched Miss Wildleigh narrowly and ceaselessly, as it seemed to her; but the young lady had a figure lithe as a serpent's, and quite a Maskelyne adroitness in her powers of disappearance and emancipation. The pupils were never allowed out but in a close column of procession, with governesses inlaid at intervals; no servant of the establishment was permitted to exchange speech with them, or minister to their surreptitious needs. Yet at night, when the gas was extinguished, and Fräulein and her companion were laid securely in their iron safes at opposite ends of the room, the governess's ear, rising watchfully from the pillow, caught sounds of orange peelings and suckings, and crunchings of something uncommonly like toffy and hard-bake. Beginning some remonstrance, Rosalina's head would pop up at once.

'O, did you hear anything, Fräulein?' she would exclaim.

'A mouse was it? I am dreadfully afraid of them. Don't rouse me again, or I sha'n't sleep a wink the whole night.'

'If you have the fear of them, mademoiselle, why you go let the crumbs fall about, and keep the sweeties under your head?' said Fräulein sternly.

But ere the question was propounded, there was a gentle sigh from the opposite couch, and Rosalina was supposed to have dropped off into the sleep of innocence. The governess was trying this business on her own account, when some change in the atmosphere and illumination of the room would rouse her anew. A slight scratching sound, an indubitable scent of a perfumed vesta, and opening her eyes she would behold Rosalina's dark head hanging over the bedside, a lighted candle on the adjacent chair, and a green-and-yellow-backed book clasped close in an extended hand. The first time of this occurrence she felt impelled to action. With an exclamation she leaped right out of bed, and bounding forwards, made a wild dive at the culprit in the distance.

'O you bad girl!' she cried. 'Just let me catch you and your vicked book, and you shall be handid up, de both of you, to Miss Brighter in de morning!'

But at the word a sudden blackness fell on her. The light was gone, and she herself, stumbling against the washhand-stand, knocked over the ware thereon, and came with a shriek to the ground. The door was opened in the same instant by a sort of female patrol, who paraded the corridors till the hour of ten. She found the hapless Fräulein almost swimming in the flood with which she had encompassed herself; the overturned basin on her head, and the water-jug emptying its last contents down her neck.

After this escapade Fräulein Liedher thought it safest to keep to her own quarters at night, and content herself with hurling threats and warnings at the head of her cunning companion. Morning arrived, she would begin her programme of vengeance by attempting a confiscation of the various contraband articles that had been espied overnight. But whether Rosalina were a siren, a sorceress, or a spiritualist, all had vanished from the scene: the book, the matches, the comestibles, even the candlestick! Baffled thus, she found that a conviction of her own incompetency was the most lively impression made on the lady-principal by her representations. Miss Brighter very possibly discredited them in no way, but being of a peculiarly practical turn of mind she naturally insisted on the production of some tangible proof. This the governess laboured in vain to bring forth. Rosalina grew sharper and stealthier; no one could watch her. And at last, bereft of sleep, and startled each instant by sounds or the semblance of them, the poor Fräulein fell really ill, and escaped to the infirmary for a week's rest.

This brought matters to a crisis. There was an awful duenna on the premises who overlooked the linen-room, a terrible old woman, only resorted to on extraordinary occasions. Miss Brighter held her in reserve as the last appliance for refractory pupils. She was called up now from her underground sphere, and established in Miss Wildleigh's room.

On the announcement of this change to the young lady in question, she was seen to smile more sweetly than ever, though her companions gave an instinctive shudder. They were all fond of Rosalina, for she was not by any means selfish in the enjoyment of

her secret stores. In the daytime she imparted cakes and candies to others with as much magical adroitness as she exercised in her own behalf at night.

'Poor little Rosy!' said Adeline Archer, one of the eldest of the school. 'Don't I pity you! Mrs. Grabbet has a grasp like iron, and is a complete cat in the dark. Light or not, she'll have you by the hair of your head before you know where you are.'

'I scarcely think you'll find me losing my head like that;' and Rosalina gave a saucy toss to the article in question.

'I said your hair.'

'And I say my head, for it must look after the locks.'

'Rosy, you are a duck!'

'Because I can dive, eh?' asked the young lady. 'But I don't take to the water like poor Fräulein, for all that;' and she laughed.

Upon this there was a general titter; for the governess's feat, with some witty embellishments, had flown pretty quickly round the school-circle.

'I must be off to my room now, and reconnoitre,' said Rosalina. 'It's forbidden, you know. What fun to have rules! How ever should we do without them? There would be nothing to break then but the crockery.'

'Rosy,' said her friend Adeline, catching her playfully round the waist as she was gliding off, 'you are up to some mischief, I'm certain. Tell us what it is? There's something in your head.'

'I hope so, since M. Doucereux comes to-day.'

'Ah, yes, you are his pet, and well you know it. But do you know too that this is his last lesson?'

'Not his very last. He only goes for a month's vacation, and he leaves such a jolly substitute—a young man, and unmarried!

Didn't old Brighter bemoan herself on the score of it !' and Rosa gave a light bound.

The entrance of the lady in question scattered the group of talkers like a covey of partridges at the first shot of the sportsman. Each one betook herself to the nearest covert, the first pretence for occupation—all, with the exception of Rosalina, who simply vanished from the scene, her disappearance as usual being of that mysterious order that baffled pursuit.

The night came, and Mrs. Grabbet with it. She was ensconced in Fräulein's iron bed, her grim old head posed, Medusa-like, on the bolster.

Rosalina smiled softly ere the gas was turned off, and was forthwith preparing for action, when a light forestalled hers, and she saw a tall menacing candle sending up a yellow flame from the duenna's end of the room.

'O Mrs. Grabbet, reading in bed !' cried Rosalina, bouncing up. 'It's against the rules. I'll tell Miss Brighter in the morning.'

Mrs. Grabbet only scowled.

'I sha'n't be able to sleep,' was the next expostulation. 'I never can with a light burning.'

'Well, no one requires it of you. Stay awake !' was the reply.

'I won't stay awake,' said Rosalina. 'It's you that will have to do that ;' and thereupon she turned found on the pillow.

Her words were to come terribly true. The duenna would have made a good sick nurse, if strained wakefulness suffices for the office. With her lids wide open, she lay there looking and listening, till it seemed as if eyes and ears had broken from their tenements and taken up their station midway in the chamber. It was tantalising meanwhile to have it proclaimed by low breathings from the opposite bed that her companion was enjoying herself

as she had proposed. When this state of things had lasted for some hours, Mrs. Grabbet thought she might relax a little ; but the transition to ease was not so readily managed. Her senses, unnaturally overwrought, were on the stretch still. She felt as if she should never sleep again.

At length she rose on her elbow, and determined to extinguish the light. Possibly the darkness might have a more soothing effect on her nerves ; but at the moment, directing a last glance towards the object of her surveillance, she caught a startling gleam from a pair of the blackest of eyes.

'God bless me !' she ejaculated, and the candlestick which she had just grasped gave a sort of death-rattle in her hands.

'What's the matter, Grabbet ?' said a silvery voice from the distance. 'Reading still ? O, won't I tell on you !'

Mrs. Grabbet would like to have shaken her till there was not much breath left for speech, but she had to content herself with a shake of her own fist instead, the frills of her night-cap bobbing horribly over her forehead the while, and marking each denunciatory motion of her old frame.

Thus the night wore on, and it was only when morning appeared, and her tall candle—short enough now—had thrown up its parting flare with a choked guttural noise, that Mrs. Grabbet's head dropped back, her lids shut up, her mouth fell open : that heavy stupor had come on which succeeds unwonted vigils.

There was a great stillness in the room then. Even Rosalina's soft breathings seemed hushed to a more perfect repose. In the pale dawn all was voiceless and at rest.

CHAPTER II.

THE morning bell rang out at seven o'clock, and there was a succession of bounds on the bedroom floor of the academy as if some wild dance had commenced. It was a war-dance in some cases. The younger girls, half blinded by sleep, and in terror of the prompt entrance of a *surveillante*, snatched quickly at the first piece of raiment that came to hand, without due regard to the rights of property, and

were caught at themselves in return, and shaken till there was not much further danger of drowsiness.

In one interior there was a moving picture—moving in the sense of wofulness—motionless in another.

Old Grabbet, with her frilled night-cap awry, her face grayer than a cemetery, her elbows planted on the dressing-table, and a bony hand on each side of her face, was posed in an awful abstraction. She was gazing fixedly before her, her

eyes literally mesmerised by one object in the room. It was the blank tenantless bed of Rosalina Wildleigh. At the first bang of the bell the duenna was on her feet; but a prior feat had outdone her. The sweet and early slumbers of her young charge had prepared her for a prompt awakening. Her garb was gone as well as herself; not a vestige of occupation remained: she had flitted fairy-like from the scene.

At length, flinging a furbelowed gown around her shoulders, Mrs. Grabbet rushed from the chamber, burst open each door in succession

along the corridor, and looked wildly for the dark eyes and light form of Rosalina. All started back at her aspect, for she paused to give no explanation; but when the full circuit was made, and in vain, she almost fell flat at the last door. Search elsewhere involved communication with Miss Brighter, who was invariably the first up in the house, and was already parading the rooms below with the eye of a lynx.

Once the summoning bell rang, any further delay was, however, impossible. Miss Brighter had a roll-call: every governess was

cited with her apportioned pupil; and if old Grabbet's limbs showed symptoms of unsteadiness before, they all but collapsed entirely now, when her turn came. Her tale told, Miss Brighter was calm at first, but insisted that the silly jest should at once be put an end to, and the truant be produced on the scene. With an unwonted relaxation of rule, liberty was conceded to the girls to search; and quite a musical sound of merriment, and a joyous pattering along parlours and passages, proclaimed their enjoyment of this boon.

Presently, however, one and all came back with the same story of unsuccess, and matters grew more serious. Commotion and consternation ensued, and the wild suggestions which sprang up on all sides drove the lady-principal almost distracted. Grabbet was seen tearing her hair up and down one of the back passages; but that didn't help much. Later on, when her incapacity grew more glaring, and she found herself elbowed rather roughly out of the way, she hobbled off to her bedroom, and appeared anon before the lady-principal bearing her old tin candlestick in one hand, while with the other she pointed to the bit of charred wick that had burned down into the socket, in proof of her vigils and devotion.

'I didn't sleep a wink, not a blessed wink, the whole night,' she murmured. 'That there light was watched to the last. It kept a flaring up into my eyes till they were just blinded.'

'That seems extremely probable,' said Miss Brighter dryly.

'It's a pity Fräulein was laid up,' interposed one of the elder girls, who had rather a spiteful remembrance of some passage with the old duenna; 'she always knew what she was about.'

'You may say so, when she

made off from that room,' retorted Mrs. Grabbet sharply. '"Flesh and blood couldn't stand it," were her words to me; "no, Mrs. Grabbet, not if they clothed a second like yourself." It's a spirit that's in it, and none but one of its own make can match it.'

Miss Brighter was too angry and anxious to give audience to such maunderings; and, wholly extinguished, Grabbet and her candlestick slunk miserably away.

Meanwhile some twenty pupils remained in the establishment. They could not all be forgotten because of one delinquent; everything could not come to a standstill in deference to a solitary absentee. So Miss Brighter decreed, with a certain rapid resumption of authority. The masters would be arriving presently. The flow of work must go on as usual, if no breath from without were to disturb its current for ever. And breakfast being the first business on hand, the summons to that meal rang out with a peremptory abruptness. Miss Brighter had the advantage of the household here. She had already partaken of this repast in her private room; and once the scattered party had mustered in the dining-hall, she sought the shelter of her sanctum anew, with a longing for a moment's breathing time to think and resolve.

Her face looked a sickly pallor as she sank into a chair, the yellow in her hair partook more largely than ever of green, and she fell insensibly into something of the picturesque pose adopted by Mrs. Grabbet in the dormitory. How Rosalina could have escaped was her engrossing reflection, and the more she pondered on it the more hopeless grew her expression. The academy was a well-guarded domicile, warranted of patent construction and stability. The house,

we had better state, 'stood in its own grounds,' as many a glowing advertisement of Miss Brighter's had set forth. But the territory was a very limited one—which the advertisement did not add—a mere margin of flower-ground at the front and sides, with a plat of vegetables in the rear. Around the enclosure was a wall of considerable height surmounted by a spiked railing, and a back and front entrance were kept rigidly locked day and night.

Inquiries already instituted without had resulted in a most emphatic statement from the gardener, who had charge of the grounds, that no young lady had been seen in them that morning. The servants within gave the same testimony as regarded Rosalina's presence; so that Miss Brighter had almost to fall back upon Grabbet's assumption respecting the spiritualistic nature of the fugitive. But this, if it threw any light on the subject, was decidedly

of a lurid character, and might be as fatal to the reputation of the academy as the escape of a pupil.

Miss Brighter thereupon roused herself, and set to a fresh examination of the premises, aided by one of her most confidential attendants. They were returning with the usual blank faces which had been the most prominent result of the most scrupulous search, when they were startled by a loud ring at the front door.

Miss Brighter glanced nervously at her watch.

'It is the English master,' she

said. 'We are an hour late. Hasten, Martha, and let him in, and summon the junior class to the lecture-room. Not a word, for your life, of what has happened in here!'

Miss Brighter's small eyes blinked excitedly as she spoke. She had a good deal at stake, and must look out accordingly. A thunderstorm menaced, but it had not broken yet. The sky might possibly clear, the clouds part, and Rosalina emerge from beneath in as magical a fashion as she had vanished. Only let matters be kept close, and all might be safe yet.

CHAPTER III.

CLOSE upon the announcement of the English teacher's advent followed that of the new French master.

Again Miss Brighter had recourse to her watch.

'He's too soon, nearly an hour too soon!' she cried. 'The girls are not ready. What is to be done?'

'Monsieur begged to apologise for a mistake about the time,' said the servant who had admitted him. 'But he has an engagement at twelve o'clock, and could not come later for this day.'

The lady-principal eyed the little neatly-written card which had been presented to her on a salver, and which bore the name, 'M. Adolph Gaillard, Professeur de la langue Française;' then, rising hurriedly, she proceeded to the classroom.

A governess was always in charge of the young ladies when a master was present; but in this instance, owing to the exceptional circumstances of the Frenchman's youth and celibacy, she determined to preside in person. She had set in train a sort of detective force to follow up traces of the missing Rosalina, and till progress had been reported on this mission she felt that she had nothing further to do.

When she reached the school-room she found M. Gaillard already seated in the professor's chair, and the girls forming themselves in class around him. He was a small man, with light hair and whiskers, and rather a stout figure; the very antipodes of the long, lean, leaden-coloured Frenchman who had contributed his polishing touch to the young ladies of the academy for the last ten years. But she could scarcely take exception to his appearance. Because he was fair it was no reason

she should be unfair; if he failed in the height of his predecessor, she need not look down upon him.

A very graceful, even gallant, bow seemed to plead expressively in his favour as she entered; and with a smile, which it cost her something to bring to the surface on this morning, Miss Brighter took her seat on a sort of dais behind a neighbouring desk. Monsieur evidently spoke little English; and his efforts to make himself intelligible in his own language being apparently too much for his audience, he launched into a sort of jargon of broken French, with a slight admixture of worse English.

'Maintenant, mes demoiselles, dépêchez-vous; je ne puis m'attendre—aux places—vite—vitement;' and he waved his hand.

The young ladies thus appealed to broke into the disorder they delighted in, quitted their even pace for a sort of canter, trod on each other's robes, and pushed and even pinched one another into position with a roughness which threatened to rub off all the gloss which had been so expensively laid on.

'This will never do,' thought Miss Brighter, in a new access of despair. 'This man can't be kept.'

The words might have been uttered aloud, such a keen glance followed on them from the Frenchman. The lady felt quite startled as she met it, and began to think even meditation dangerous.

'Eh, bien! qu'apprenez-vous?' pursued M. Gaillard, in the same breath. 'Mais il ne fait pas de cas. Je vais vous montrer mon moyen—un livre—aucun livre—sans un soupçon de délai: la vitesse—voilà toute la bataille!' and his small feet began a sort of battery of impatience.

Miss Brighter could scarcely keep her seat. The want of dignity shocked her to that degree

that she felt a thrill of horror creeping over her; and had it not been that two scenes would have been rather much to embark in at once, she would have given the gentleman his *congé* then and there. But she surely had had enough of French leave-taking for that morning. If expulsion were to follow on escape, menace on mystery, a double train was fired. To exercise her potency now was to run full upon publicity; to be at daggers-drawn with another was to suspend the sword above her own head.

Meanwhile the professor continued brisk and unabashed.

'Allons, mes enfants!' he exclaimed, and at the familiar term Miss Brighter shuddered. 'Allons, courage, my leetle ones! We will now de work begin;' and he took a brown-backed book, a grammar of Noël and Chapsal, from the hands of Miss Archer, who stood at the top of the class. 'Je vais prendre un mot—a bon mot, if you will—for de study of de hour. Que sera-t-il?'

The girls were all silent, and began to titter.

'Tenez—I will give it you for de first of times myself. I have it—I have de word for us to reflect upon. Moi, I do see it reflected at once. It is mirrored in de eyes which encircle me here. Je voudrais dire *l'amour*. Voilà a ting beautiful and well beknown—la chose à quoi l'on pense le plus. You surely will have dis lesson by heart. You will not show de leetle ignorance here.'

'He's mad, quite mad!' murmured Miss Brighter. 'What is to be done?' and she beat her hands wildly on the desk.

'Now, Mees Archer; you who were so obliging wid de book,' he pursued, 'continuez s'il vous plaît. Pourquoi ne répondez-vous pas?'

'What is it you asked me?' began Adeline stammeringly.

'What you tink of de love, as you call it? Le petit cupidon, si vous le voulez. Mais je vois que vous ne faites pas d'attention; vous riez. You do laugh all, mesdemoiselles. Je ne permets jamais de sourire. Les mains—hands out—tout de suite! I go give you each a leetle pandy.'

Miss Brighter's hair was on end now, and she sprang up with a sort of shriek.

'Monsieur, I cannot permit the class to be conducted thus! You are probably a stranger to the instruction of young ladies. M. Doucereux should not have recommended you for them!'

'Point de tout, madame; not in de least bit étranger. De ladies, I do know them better than any man. I am amongst them; I make one of them all my life. This it is only the beginning of de lesson—le préambule je voudrais dire. Concede me that I do continue. We will put de punishment aside. I give de pardon pour ce jour-ci.'

Miss Brighter sank back trembling and overawed. Her nerves were not generally of so feeble an order; but she had gone through much within the last few hours. Her aspect was shaken, her eye clouded, her locks lustreless. It would take a good many double doses of her favourite 'restorer' to renew her to the pristine placidity of the past.

Meanwhile the professor was in his element. As she fell back he started up, the Noël and Chapsal held aloft. This, if it had no other use, was to serve as an outlet for his eloquence, and he wielded it so theatrically that the old brown back was at one moment a weapon of vengeance, anon an enchanter's wand, in his hand. He had launched into a discourse which it

would have taken a lunatic to report, and which was, happily for himself, so utterly unintelligible that it could admit of no objection. Miss Brighter sat and listened motionless. She was as powerless to interfere as if she were held enthralled by some masterpiece of one of the ancient orators. At moments Monsieur Gaillard would pounce suddenly on one of the girls, put a question to her in a startling, almost defiant, way, which frightened her out of her wits, and before she had recovered or responded dash off to another. Thus it went on for a full half hour. Then monsieur pulled quickly at his watch-chain, glanced at a tiny 'Geneva,' and hurried on to his peroration. Up to this point bets might have been freely taken that no wilder piece of declamation could be heard or uttered; but it remained for him to prove that if no other could rival him, he could surpass himself. He seemed bent especially on terrifying unfortunate Miss Brighter, and he succeeded so well that he had her literally petrified in her chair, her features stiffened, and her eyes staring. As to the girls, they were let off easier. He had a sort of cunning smile for them at times, a telegraphic signal of encouragement. In any case their motto seemed to be, '*Quocunque trahunt fata, sequamur.*' The spell of one rule broken, there was a bound of relief, and they were off like an escaped flock to the next leader. Finally M. Gaillard wound up with a sort of blessing over them all, his arms outstretched and his eyes uplifted. It had quite a moving effect on Miss Brighter. There was a fresh

agitation in her looks, and the power of action came back to her. Rising suddenly she made a step towards the professor—only one—then she stopped. He had already advanced to the stage of farewells, and the class was in a state of trepidation. He seemed to come unnecessarily close for the process, and each young lady in turn started back with a little shriek. But there was one who could not escape him. This was the eldest and head of the class, Adeline Archer. Before her he made a resolute pause.

'*Chère mes!*' he exclaimed, 'you who fetch me de book, who show so much complaisance and cleverness. Of you I must take de leave—*permettez-moi—à la Française;*' and at the word his well-bearded face drew near hers, and he would have approached his lips to either cheek.

This was too much. The spell that bound Miss Brighter's limbs loosened like an avalanche. One plunge and she was upon him, and had seized him by the back of the hair. There was no other way left. Dignity must vanish in the presence of danger.

'You wretch!' she cried; 'be-gone this instant! Wherever you came from, come here no more!' and she shook him vehemently.

In the same instant the large schoolroom door was flung ceremoniously open, and the announcement made in full form, 'Monsieur Adolph Gaillard.' A start ran through the assembly, and Miss Brighter's prisoner gave a bound; but she held him too tight. Escape seemed impossible, and yet it was managed. His locks were

burst—burst in more senses than one—and he was free. With a face of horror the lady-principal found nothing left in her grasp but a curled carrotty wig. Like one of the floating figures seen in some spiritual *séance*, a form hovered for one second before her gaze, a door opened in the distance, and the professor was gone.

The lady sank gasping in a seat, her colour turned to lividness, and her eyes closed. Instantly two or three of the girls were over her,

foremost among whom was Adeline Archer.

'Loosen her cap—unhook her belt—lower her head—lay her flat on the ground!' she exclaimed eagerly, and there was a mischievous gleam in her eyes.

The words reached Miss Brighter's ears, and she would have recovered rapidly, but her attendants were too assiduous for that. Before she knew where she was, the chair was from under her, her form prostrate, her cap gone, and a gray tress, which had resisted every refreshing application, floating over each temple, while a handkerchief snatched from her pocket was

waved in anything but victorious fashion above her head. —

It was a terrible 'moment, one not lightly to be outlived. If her swoon passed off swiftly, something else went with it. Her prestige was lost, her power gone, the control department done away with. Even though the new professor advanced gracefully to his chair, and was tall, grave, and glossy; even though the departed Rosalina, resuscitated for the occasion, appeared magically on the scene, and took her place demurely in the class,—naught could restore her dignity to the lady-principal, efface the picture of her collapse,

or steady her tottering sceptre. Despite of her very palpable downfall, a 'rise' had been taken out of her. It could never be pardoned, never forgotten. Of what avail that a spirit of order was returning now when there was the ghost of the past to meet it?

Later in the day, when the girls gathered for their luncheon of bath-buns in the long dining-hall, sounds were heard emanating thence which rang like a peal of joy-bells through the house.

Rosalina, with her dark eyes glittering, and her elfish locks about her shoulders, was elevated on a form in the pose of an auctioneer. On each arm hung some article of a gentleman's attire, and a well-padded waistcoat was exhibited conspicuously in one hand, while a wig and whiskers were dangled in the other.

'Wasn't it fun?' she cried, in her ringing tones. 'I had the old things from the last charade hidden away in the bottom of my trunk. I knew I could make up in dashing style. I believe not one of you detected me but Adeline. I was afraid of my voice—that was the only thing; but that jumble stood me well. What between broken English and French there was little chance of a break-down.'

'But, Rosy dear, how did you scale those horrid spiky walls?' questioned Miss Archer, giving a little coaxing clasp to her waist. 'You'll tell us like a duck.'

'Or a goose, Miss Addie? No, no; get out yourselves, if you can and how you can. But my way is my own; you'll not get it out of me.'

And she kept to this resolve like a rock. Fearless for herself, she would scarcely have hesitated to embark in the fullest explanations had it not been that the confession would implicate another, and bring trouble upon

her. It chanced that the laundry-woman engaged at the academy had been Rosalina's first nurse. The woman had loved her as a baby, idolised her as a mischievous little child, and could refuse her nothing still. Through her means the dainties were conveyed in weekly supplies to the young lady; and on the eventful morning succeeding Mother Grabbet's watch, Rosalina stole out of bed, donned her disguise, and finding her friend in the corridor carrying off the week's washing, she was smuggled out of the establishment in a huge hamper, canopied over by a counterpane. Mrs. Grabbet, who generally superintended the linen department, was, as we know, engaged in another engrossing work at this crisis, and the coast was left clear.

If Lady Carinthia received her daughter back on her hands pretty promptly after this escapade, no revelation accompanied the precious transmission beyond the announcement that Miss Brighter was retiring from her post. She had made her money; and with a high income to support her, no surprise need have been excited if she sank fearlessly into private life. Yet another whisper arose fatal to the healthiness of her former reputation, a whisper that some disorder had crept into the very heart of her academy, which must ultimately have undermined its whole constitution—that one of its latest pupils had studied witchery, rather than bewitchment, under her very eye; had resisted the polishing process that had ground down so many; had played pranks with ease, but failed utterly in her execution of Schumann and Chopin; and discarding the restraint of every calisthenic appliance, had remained as true to nature and *naïveté* as if she were intended for unartificial life.

A CHRISTMAS WARNING.

SAT the poet at his rhyming,
While the joyous bells were chiming,
While the Christmas snow lay deep ;

And it chanced from anxious thought,
Brain and fancy over-wrought,
That the poet fell asleep.

And his long ears heard a whisper
From a merry elfish lisper.

Quoth the tiny spirit thus :

‘ Leave all labyrinths and mazes,
Take the old familiar phrases.
Master poet, you will never,
If you rack your brains for ever,
Find a truer word than this :
A merry Christmas to all here,
With kindly words and right good cheer.’

But the poet, rudely waking,
Cried, ‘ A great mistake you’re making !
Now the world has turned so blue,
Nothing commonplace will do.

Christmas-time is quite a sell,
As these verses soon will tell ;
For it brings a relaxation
From our higher education.

But the new year ’ll soon be here ;
And the time is drawing near
When our pinafores we’ll don,
And our lessons once more con.

May we write all kinds of essays,
Listen to all kinds of teaching !
May we be for ever reaching
Something that we cannot grasp !

All old theories let us shatter,
And discuss with endless chatter
Things we do not understand.

Therefore, O New Year, remember
That, unless you are a member
Of the Education Board,

We shall have no time to fritter,
And you’ll find the snubbing bitter
That to you we shall afford.’

MY ADVENTURE.

The Story of a granted Wish.

'To know the misery of a granted prayer.' I believe the line is Pope's. I am sure it is some old author, for I read it during my stay at Dullerton, and no books of modern date ever find their way to that dreary place. Dullerton, justly named—for it was the quietest, cleanest, dreariest country town in England. I spent three years there with an old aunt, and hope I may never visit the place again. It sounds ungrateful to say this, for aunt Anne was very good to me, but it was such a change from the gay and happy, albeit somewhat Bohemian, life I led in London with my father. He was an artist, not a very successful one, I believe; but we had enough to satisfy our modest requirements, and I certainly was happy enough till that unlucky day that my father accepted an offer to travel for three years with a nobleman, who fancied he had a taste for painting, and wished to study in Italy under my father's direction. Of course it was a very advantageous thing in a pecuniary point of view, but I did not think of that during the years I spent under aunt Anne's wing at Dullerton during my father's absence from England. There was nothing to see, nothing to do, nothing to think about. I was too thorough a cockney to care for country pursuits, and, besides, we lived in a country *town*, not a village. Aunt Anne's house was in the High-street, one of those neat white houses with green blinds and a brass knocker that one always sees in such a street, with a strip of garden as big as a pocket-

handkerchief at the back. Here I lived—or *vegetated*—for three long years. And all that time I was sighing for an adventure—something to happen, something to break the monotony of existence. The reader shall hear how I gained my wish at last, and learned to endorse the truth of the words with which I began my story.

'Blessed is the life that has no history,' aunt Anne would say, with a sigh and a smile, as I used to wish for something, anything, to happen, to make a little variety in my life. 'You'll find the truth of that one day, Ella.'

Poor soul, she had had her 'adventures' in life, and had not found the experience agreeable. After twenty years' devotion to a reprobate husband,—twenty years spent wandering about the world in quest of the 'fortune' men of his class never find,—she was only too thankful to settle down in her widowhood at cheap quiet Dullerton, and enjoy the little annuity that a relative had bequeathed to her. After her troublous life she was contented to sit in peace and knit in her neat parlour from year's end to year's end; but I, who was young and restless, and, like the bears, 'had all my troubles before me,' was less tractable. If it had not been for the organ at the church I think I must have run away, or died of sheer *ennui*. We had a fine old church at Dullerton, almost as large as a small cathedral (excuse the Irishism). It was rich in brasses and fine tombs; I used often to wish I had known the

place before so many of its inhabitants had died, for it must have been livelier before the church was so full. I really believe there were more male effigies in the tombstones than living young men in the town—probably *living* people did not care to stay in so dull a place. The church, though very fine, was sadly out of repair, but its restoration was a thing not to be thought of in a poor town like ours. The churchwardens did a little vamping-up here and there, but as long as the roof held together further repairs were not dreamed about. Consequently even some of the tombs wanted looking to, and our vicar occasionally made feeble efforts to have them attended to; but as he was no richer than the rest of us, the effort generally ended in talk.

One thing the church possessed, a very good organ. It had been bequeathed to the parish by a Dullerton man who had been educated at a local charity school. He left the place and made his fortune 'in foreign parts,' remembering his native town with this handsome legacy. I was passionately fond of music, and when our good easy vicar gave me *carte blanche* to use this organ, I found life at Dullerton more endurable. As an artist's daughter I could not be insensible to the beauty of the church itself, and between practising on the organ, sketching the interior of the church, and making myself intimately acquainted with the tombs and brasses, I spent a great part of the day in the sacred edifice. One cold winter's afternoon I remember having a peculiarly dismal fit. I had been indoors for two or three days in consequence of a heavy fall of snow, and when, late in the afternoon, the weather began to clear, I felt I must go out if only for an hour. Aunt Anne, sitting peacefully knitting by the

side of the fire, expressed mild astonishment at my restlessness; but as usual I got my own way, and issued forth cloaked and muffled to obtain the 'breath of air' for which I had petitioned. Having once got out I thought I would make the most of my liberty and try just one chant on that dear old organ. The church would hardly be colder than outdoors, and I was warmly muffled up. Calling at the vicarage for the key of the church, I went on my wilful way, little thinking how soon my longing for an 'adventure' was to be satisfied. It was growing dusk as I unlocked the heavy door and stepped inside the church, so dusk, indeed, that I missed my footing at the step inside, and slipped, falling against the door in my effort to save myself. The door slammed to, *leaving the key in the lock outside*. So here I was a prisoner. I sat down on the step and felt excessively foolish. Here was a pretty state of things. How on earth was I to get out? The door, like everything else, was out of repair, and depended on the key for opening it; there was no latch within. I tried to turn the key through the keyhole, but only succeeded in breaking my nails. Then I remembered reading in my childhood how a similar misadventure befell the famous Goody Two Shoes, and how she made her case known by ringing the bells. But, alas, our belfry was approached by a flight of turret steps, terminated by a door, which I found—*locked*. Old Saunders, the sexton, was a careful man, and had, doubtless, the key safe in his pocket at home. Goody Two Shoes' experiences were therefore of no service to me.

The church was about ten minutes' walk from any habitation, and no one was likely to pass it, so I might have shouted for ever without attracting attention, even could

my voice have penetrated through the stout oaken door. I once thought of escaping by the windows, but they were all too high from the ground, and even in this emergency I should have hesitated at breaking a pane of the rare old glass. My only hope was that aunt Anne would become alarmed and miss me, although as she had no idea I had gone to the church she might send in every wrong direction before seeking me in the right one. I had promised to return the key at the vicarage as I went home, but it was doubtful if my nonappearance that evening would excite surprise. Mr. Scott, our old bachelor vicar, was one of the most absent of men, and, if he was immersed in his books, had probably forgotten the key and myself by this time. My only hope of rescue lay in aunt Anne. As I rose from the step where I had been sitting reflecting on the situation, I began to feel that 'adventures,' after all, were not without alloy. I thought so still more some hours later. Despite my wraps I began to feel very cold, and as some hours might yet elapse before I was set free, I began to make myself as comfortable as I could under the circumstances. Fortunately for me Dullerton folks were chilly people, and every seat had a loose scrap of drugget or carpet. I recollected these and the hassocks, and arranged myself a snug nest by the chancel, where I could command a full view of the west door, in case any one came to look for me. There I lay down among the dusty carpets, and felt warm again. It was not a cheerful position, however, and I would gladly have exchanged it for aunt Anne's snug parlour with all its dulness. I was neither a nervous nor a superstitious girl, but the church looked so weird and 'eerie' in the waning light;

the dim aisles fading away into darkness; strange grotesque shadows falling in the nave, all around so very still. I felt such uncomfortably 'creepy' sensations coming over me that I shut my eyes to exclude outside objects, and, as people often do in such cases, soon fell asleep.

I must have slept some hours, for on waking I found the moon shining. I now began to feel very uneasy. How was it that I had not yet been missed? Was I to be condemned to 'make a night of it' in the church? It was a blessing that the next day was Sunday, I thought ruefully; at any rate, I was sure to be found when Saunders came to open the doors. But this was small comfort for the present moment, when I began to feel not only cold, but hungry. I lay looking down the long vista of the nave, at all the familiar tombs I knew so well: the knights and ladies lying stiff and still, with solemn-faced rows of children kneeling at their sides, and strange animals, like nothing in nature, lying at their feet. The white figures looked ghastly enough in the uncertain light (for clouds were obscuring the moon ever and anon), and I began to think, by way of cheerful and appropriate meditation, of all the strange stories I had heard in my childhood; of white-robed figures seen flitting down dusky aisles, of spectral banquets spread in churchyards, and last, but not least, of the weird German ghost-stories,—Lenore and her midnight ride with her spectre lover, Goethe's horrible poem of the 'Lost Shroud,' and similar pleasant tales. I sat up and tried to shake off the uncomfortable sensations creeping over me, and told myself how absurd I was to think of such rubbish. As I raised myself my glance fell on a large square tomb nearly oppo-

site, standing back in the side aisle. I knew every stone in the church, and that special tomb was an old eye-sore to me; for though it was clearly intended to bear a recumbent effigy, the figure was now wanting, probably having been removed at the time of the Civil Wars, when Cromwell's soldiers had been quartered in the church to its great injury. Some stone effigies, much dilapidated, had long been lying in the vaults of the church, and Mr. Scott had often talked of putting one on this tomb; but, like everything in the way of repairs or alterations, the work ended in talk. Yet as I looked across now, I distinctly saw a figure lying on the slab. 'Mr. Scott has actually filled up that blank tomb at last,' I thought, as I strained my eyes to distinguish what kind of figure he had selected for the post. 'It is a great chance if he has found the original effigy,' I reflected; 'very probably he has put some crusading knight over the grave of a bishop, or an Elizabethan lawyer over a mediæval lady. I know the tomb had no name or date on it, and I believe the effigies were all, more or less, battered about—well, at any rate, the figure will have to be satisfied, for it cannot get up and walk back to the vault;' and I thought of Don Giovanni and the scene where the statue of the commodore stalks in. I was sorry I had done so afterwards, for I kept glancing at the tomb with the idea how horrible it would be if that quiet figure *should* move. Of course I knew this was absurd and impossible; but I was in a mood to terrify myself with all kinds of foolish fancies. The moon was shining very brightly at one moment, and disappearing behind clouds the next; but by the uncertain light I could distinctly make out the shadowy outline of the new figure.

Its legs were crossed, I was sure; therefore it must be a Crusader. But it was not in armour; in fact, I could not satisfactorily make out what its costume was. The only distinct part about it was the crossed legs, for a pillar hid the upper part of the body from my view. Looking steadily at it, I fancied (was it only fancy?) that *the legs moved!* As this pleasant idea occurred to me, the moon again disappeared; another few seconds and it shone out again, and I ventured to look across once more to reassure myself. There was no movement in the rigid form; *but the legs were crossed no longer.* Could I have been mistaken in thinking they had ever been so? Impossible! I had noted the circumstance so particularly. Yet they were most certainly uncrossed now. Again the light waned, and again appeared. This time I lay looking with all my power, unable to move or stir. Was I going mad, or did my eyes play me false? Slowly, but unmistakably, did the figure begin to stir; it moved restlessly on its stony couch, and finally *sat upright*, clear and distinct in the moonlight. I cannot attempt to describe the terror that seized on me at this fearful sight. My heart throbbing, and my eyes strained, I lay as if fascinated, unable to take my eyes off the object of my terror. This was certainly no trick of imagination, but a fearful reality. Never have I experienced moments of such mental agony as when I lay cowering among my wrappings, with straining eyeballs fixed on that fearful thing—ghost, demon, what?—moving opposite. Presently it rose and stood upright in the aisle, looking around as if in search of something. I tried to draw one of the druggets over my head, for I could not bear the sight longer; but as I moved

a yell rang through the stillness, and the figure *rushed at me*. How I found power to rise I know not, but I have a remembrance of a mad flight down the nave and round the aisles, with that fearful pursuer behind—on, on, like a vision in a dreadful dream; and then another fiendish yell, a clutch of cold fingers at my throat, and—darkness and vacancy!

‘My dear madam, I assure you it is only a fainting fit; our dear young patient will be quite herself again in a few moments,’ were the first words that fell on my ear as I opened my eyes again to consciousness. I knew the bland tones of little Dr. Grey, our local Esculapius, and their friendly and familiar sound was so reassuring that I struggled feebly into a sitting posture, and looked round to find myself still in the church, but the centre of an excited group of all the magnates of Dullerton. Poor aunt Anne knelt at my side sobbing so hysterically that she spilt on the floor the glass of water she tried to carry to my lips. Dr. Grey, affable as ever (he would have been affable at an earthquake), was feeling my pulse; Mr. Scott, Saunders, and quite a small crowd stood around.

‘O my child, my poor dear child,’ sobbed aunt Anne in incoherent self-reproach, ‘I shall never, never forgive myself—what you have undergone—and all my carelessness—but could any one have imagined such a thing happening?’

‘Is it—’ I began, shuddering, as the events of the past came back on me with all their horror.

‘Calm yourself, my dear young lady,’ interrupted Dr. Grey; ‘we will not think anything about the disagreeable shock we have undergone; there was nothing supernatural, only a very unfortunate

accident; but we are all safe now, and we shall go home and have a good night’s rest, and forget all this annoyance.’

It was some time, however, before I enjoyed that ‘good night’s rest,’ for my nerves had undergone a serious shock; and some days passed before I was even able to hear the explanation of my ‘adventure.’

It appears that after I had gone out, aunt Anne’s next-door neighbour sent a request that she would take tea with her, as she was not quite well and wanted cheering up. Kind-hearted aunt Anne obeyed the summons of course, but on her return home about half-past nine o’clock was greatly alarmed to find I was not yet in. Molly, the maid, had taken for granted I had joined her at her friend’s, and therefore felt no anxiety till her mistress returned alone. Like all lonely women, aunt Anne turned to the first *man* available in all sudden calamities; and Mr. Scott being close at hand, she hurried off to him in her alarm, while Molly started for the cottage of Jim Bates, our local policeman. Roused from his studies, Mr. Scott remembered that I had borrowed the key for the purpose of going to the church some hours previously, and thither he and aunt Anne hurried. Molly on her part encountered Jim Bates in the street with a crowd at his heels. I was not the only person who had disappeared that evening. A pauper lunatic in our workhouse, who had long been suspected of homicidal tendencies, had suddenly committed a murderous assault on another of the inmates, and escaped during the subsequent confusion. For some hours Jim Bates and his assistants had been scouring the neighbourhood in search of this dangerous maniac, till at last some one recollected that Saunders and

his wife were cleaning in the church at the time he effected his escape, and that it was just possible he had slipped in there and been locked in. This, in fact, proved to be the case. The lunatic must have been lurking in the church when I entered it; with the restlessness of an infirm brain he had wandered about, mimicking the attitudes of the quiet effigies around, and it was while thus 'posing' for a Crusader that he first attracted my attention. My involuntary movement first drew his attention to *me*, and roused him to another outburst of maniacal fury. I have little doubt that I owe my life to the providential entry of the party without, who

heard my screams and the lunatic's yell, and rushed in just as he had clutched me. The poor creature was overpowered with great difficulty, and taken back to the work-house; he did not survive many days, dying in one of his paroxysms.

It was some time before I recovered from the effects of that terrible night; and even now, though thirty years have rolled away, the sight of a marble cross-legged Crusader on a tombstone always gives me an uncomfortable sensation.

I have certainly never again wished to encounter 'adventures'; my one experience has fully satisfied me.

C. L.

CHRISTMAS TWILIGHT.

THERE is no hearth this merry Christmastide
 But one dear face is missing, that was wont
 To make the joy and sunlight of our lives
 Sweeter to us than all the world beside.

In twilight hours the pain is ever keen,
 And yet there comes a thought of trembling joy;
 How bright the welcome when at last we gain
 The things on earth long hoped for, though unseen!

FIFTY YEARS AGO :

A Grandsire's Dream.

I sit within my ingle-nook,
So old and gray, I know ;
I close my eyes and backward look :
'Tis fifty years ago—
Ere youth has fled, or hope is dead,
And life's sands running low.

The Christmas bells are chiming sweet
('Tis fifty years ago),
There comes the fall of fairy feet
Across the trackless snow ;
And hearts beat high, to pleasures nigh,
Just fifty years ago.

From out the ivied manor-house
I see a golden glow ;
And merry voices welcome us
('Tis fifty years ago)—
A laughing band stand hand in hand,
A crowd pass to and fro.

In hall and homestead, great and small,
Sing blithely as they go ;
The smile of one is smile of all
('Tis fifty years ago),
And hearts are light and eyes are bright,
That Christmas long ago.

A face looks out from wealth of hair,
That waves o'er brow of snow ;
And brown eyes droop with shyest air
('Tis fifty years ago),
And cheeks are flushed and voices hushed
To whispers sweet and low.

A kerchief crossed a swelling breast,
The heart that throbbed below
Grew restless with its own unrest ;
For, ah, how could you know
That I loved you, so well, so true,
Just fifty years ago ?

THE CHRISTMAS VISITOR AT POLYPODIUM HOUSE.

POLYPODIUM HOUSE was in a state of wild excitement. Inside and outside, from roof to basement, all betokened preparations for the reception of some specially honoured guest. Never in the annals of Polypodium House had the brass plate on the door shone with such brilliant lustre. Never (well, hardly ever) had the doorstep been hearthstoned to such marble whiteness, or the oilcloth in the hall beeswaxed to such alarming slipperiness. Warm smells of a cakey description pervaded the lower regions, and even found their way prematurely into the drawing-room, where the two Misses Pimpernel sat in eager expectation. Here, too, the evidences of festive preparation were obvious to the least acute observer. The chintz covers had been removed from the horse-hair chairs; pale-blue rosettes adorned the legs of the terrestrial and celestial globes, and of the ancient cottage piano. Even the bust of Cicero, under the sideboard, was decorated with a garland of paper roses. But the crowning glory of the room was its antimacassars. Antimacassars had always been a leading feature at Polypodium House Academy. Ill-natured people, unable to conceive a devotion to art for its own sake, had been known to remark that the parents paid for the materials, the young ladies did the work, and the Misses Pimpernel kept the antimacassars; but be this as it might, it is certain that the antimacassar manufacture was carried on at Polypodium House with

extraordinary vigour. There were some of soft clinging wool, against which you leaned back luxuriously; and spiteful nobbly ones, which hurt your head when you sat down, and stuck to your coat-collar and hung down your back when you got up again. On the mantelpiece stood a miniature of a chubby-faced young man, with stubbly red hair; and over it hung an oil-painting representing the two Misses Pimpernel in early youth, with very short-waisted dresses and very tall tortoise-shell combs. They were depicted seated on the same sofa, their arms lovingly entwined together, and the youngest Miss Pimpernel gazing upwards with rapt affection at the eldest Miss Pimpernel's tortoise-shell comb. And here, on the selfsame sofa, sat the Misses Pimpernel again. Miss Pamela was perhaps a shade fatter, and Miss Penelope a shade taller and thinner than in the old days. The short-waisted dresses had succumbed to the change of influences of time and fashion, and the Misses Pimpernel had scarcely so brilliant a complexion, or so much of it, as they appeared to have had at their pictorial age, but all else was unchanged; the sofa, the tortoise-shell combs, the hair in little bunches of frizzy ringlets on either side of the head, even to the pose of Miss Pamela's disengaged hand on the arm of the sofa, and the little lace handkerchief which in the portrait she held daintily nipped by its middle between her thumb and second finger, and which she now held in

like manner, daintily nipped between her second finger and thumb,—all seemed so little altered that one might almost have fancied that having taken their place on the sofa for the purpose of the portrait, the sisters had remained there ever since. On the present occasion, however, Miss Pamela's eyes were directed towards the effigy of the chubby youth on the mantelpiece. Her sister, meanwhile, was employed in knitting, occasionally stopping to listen as if for some expected sound. After a few moments' gaze at the sandy youth, Miss Pamela exclaimed, pressing the small lace handkerchief with both hands to her left side,

'De-ar Peter! how I long to see him; you are sure he said to-night, Penelope?'

'My dear child, how can you be so absurd? Here is his letter. Read it again if you feel any doubt on the subject, though you must have done so quite six times already. He distinctly says he hopes to be with us about seven o'clock on Tuesday evening, the 23d. This is Tuesday, is it not? and it is now a quarter to seven.'

'Thirteen minutes, dear! Thirteen minutes! Only to think that in a few short minutes he will be *here*!' Here Miss Pamela again pressed the small handkerchief spasmodically against her left side, as if that was the spot referred to.

'Now, Pamela, my dear,' said the elder sister, in a warning voice, and holding up her knitting-needle by way of emphasis, 'beware! You know what Dr. Dott said. You *must not* let that sensitive organisation of yours run away with you, or he will not answer for the consequences. Dr. Dott will not answer for the consequences; remember that, Pamela.'

'O, bother Dr. Dott!' said Miss Pamela. 'Excuse me, my dear Penelope, and don't look so dread-

fully shocked. You know what a silly impulsive creature I am, and to have an only brother returning from India after twenty years' absence is enough to *bouleverse* anybody, I'm sure. Only fancy, twenty years! It's quite a romance, isn't it? Now, Penelope, even you, with your strong common-sense, you must admit that it's quite a romance.'

'Well, no dear, I don't think I should go quite as far as that. It is romantic, to a certain extent, perhaps; but I don't think I should describe it as *quite* a romance.'

Miss Pamela playfully whipped her sister with the small lace handkerchief.

'O, of course, most precise Penelope! Always correcting poor little me. We'll say it's *almost* a romance then? Romance or not, my dear, I believe in your quiet way you are nearly as excited about it as I am.'

'If you mean that I shall be glad to see our long-lost brother, Pamela, I do not deny it; but as for allowing myself to become *excited* on that or any other subject, I should *hope*—'

But what Miss Penelope would have hoped was not destined to be revealed to the world, for at this moment a loud rat-tat-tat was heard at the front door.

'Tis HE!' exclaimed Miss Pamela, and rushed to the door, closely followed by her less impulsive sister. The door being opened, there appeared a rather shabby little man, of chubby appearance, and wearing his hat, which appeared a good deal too large for him, very far back on his head. Miss Pamela made a swoop at him from the top step, and flung one arm (with the lace handkerchief) over his left shoulder, at the same time hiding her face on the other.

'Our own, our long-lost brother!' she murmured. 'Twenty years!'

The shabby little man submitted passively to her embrace, though with a look of some slight surprise, and murmured, like an echo :

‘ Ah, twen-ty years !’

‘ When you have quite done, Pamela, my dear,’ interposed Miss Penelope, with dignity, ‘ I also will embrace our brother. Still the same impulsive being, you see, Peter ! Just the same playful child you remember twenty years ago.’

‘ Ah, yes,’ said Peter, gazing earnestly at Miss Pamela. ‘ Playful child ! Twenty years is a long time, though.’

Here Miss Pamela gave a spasmodic wriggle, expressive of intense emotion, and subsided, with the lace handkerchief pressed to her eyes, into one of the hall chairs.

‘ Now, Peter,’ said her sister, ‘ it is *my* turn. Embrace your Penelope,’ at the same time making a sideways lunge at him with her head, and leaving her cheek in convenient proximity to his lips. Peter embraced her accordingly, though without any appearance of extreme delight.

Miss Penelope applied her handkerchief to her eyes.

‘ This is weakness,’ she exclaimed (though, to do her justice, there was no indication that it was anything of the sort). ‘ Peter, welcome to England. Welcome to our modest little home, and come and have some tea.’

‘ And badly enough you must want it, poor fellow, after that dreadful long journey,’ said Miss Pamela, who had by this time recovered from her emotion. ‘ And such a frightfully hot climate too.’

‘ You giddy, giddy child,’ said Miss Penelope, shaking her forefinger at her sister. ‘ You surely don’t suppose Peter has come straight away from India this evening ? That would be rather too much of a good thing, wouldn’t it, Peter ?’

‘ Well, hasn’t he ?’ replied Miss Pamela. ‘ I’m sure I don’t know. I don’t profess to know anything about geography out of school hours. Come, Penelope, let us lead Peter in in triumph. You take one arm, and I’ll take the other, and we’ll carry him off between us. Stop, first let me hang up his hat. Fancy, Penelope, a real *man’s hat* hanging up in the hall of Polypodium House !’

‘ D’ye think it’ll be safe there ?’ said Peter hesitatingly. ‘ Because—it’s rather a good hat, and I shouldn’t like anything to happen to it.’

‘ There’s caution for you !’ said Miss Pamela airily. ‘ That’s our careful Peter all over. He always was a careful boy. Never fear, then, its hat *shall* be taken care of, and next time it comes we’ll have a glass case made on purpose for it, that we will.’

‘ You giddy—*giddy* child !’ again exclaimed Miss Penelope, tapping her sister reprovably with her eyeglass, ‘ how *can* you go on so ? Upon my word you are only fit for a pinafore and pantalettes. What Peter will think of you I really don’t know.’

‘ Peter will think that his little Pamela is so delighted to see him that she isn’t accountable for anything, and excuse all shortcomings accordingly, won’t you, Peter ?’

‘ O, yes, I’ll excuse ’em,’ said Peter.

‘ Dear Peter, I knew you would !’ And Miss Pamela shot a flying kiss at his cheek, but, being short of stature, unfortunately missed her aim, and alighted on his ear, which he forthwith began to rub vigorously.

‘ Pamela, you are really too impulsive,’ said Miss Penelope. ‘ You have hurt him, I am sure !’

‘ O, no,’ said Peter, ‘ it ain’t that. But it felt like an earywig.’

‘ Ah, poor dear boy,’ said his

younger sister, 'any one can see that you have not been accustomed to the kiss of affection.'

'No, I ain't,' said Peter. 'That's just where it is, and it tickles.'

By this time the sisters had conveyed their long-lost brother into the parlour, where the tea-table was laid out. Miss Penelope presided at the tea-tray, while Miss Pamela sat beside their visitor on the sofa, and plied him with the various delicacies on the festive board, which he attacked with a vigour which left nothing to be desired. On Miss Penelope expressing a hope that his tea was to his liking,

'It's be-eautiful,' he replied, with his mouth full of buttered toast. 'We don't get such tea as this over *there*, I can tell you. And as for *srimps*, lor, if they was fatted calves, they couldn't be more of a curiosity.'

The two sisters had exchanged glances more than once, as their brother let slip some grammatical solecism. Miss Penelope now remarked:

'You haven't had many opportunities of speaking English in India, I daresay, Peter?'

'What, me? Well, no, not to say many opportunities,' said Peter.

'And that not in the *best* society, very likely?' said Miss Pamela.

'O, yes, the society's all right, when you're used to it. Some of 'em's a little peculiar, of course; but they're all right, except when they get throwing things.'

The sisters exchanged glances again. Peter had clearly not moved in the best society.

'Do you know, Peter,' said Miss Pamela archly, 'I always made up my mind you would marry a Begum.'

'Not me,' said Peter. 'That 'ud be what they call bigamy, wouldn't it?'

Again the sisters looked at one another. Had a pun (and *such* a pun!) actually profaned the classic groves of Polypodium House? But no, Peter was evidently serious. Nay, more, he seemed really anxious for an answer.

'Dear me!' said Miss Pamela. 'Perhaps I didn't use the right expression. I certainly thought it was Begum. What do you call the black ladies in India, Peter?'

Peter looked perplexed.

'Aunt Sallies, ain't it?' he said.

'Now, you naughty boy, you are poking fun at me. You know I mean an Indian word—Nabob, that's not it. Tiffin; no, that's something to eat. It *must* be Begum. Or is it Bogum? No, Begum, I think. However, it doesn't matter. I'm very glad you're not married, and that our brother has returned to us a gay young bachelor. I shall expect you to beau us about everywhere, sir, mind that. Now we have got you we intend to make good use of you, I can tell you.'

Peter, still with his mouth full, made some unintelligible answer. Miss Pamela, struck apparently by a happy thought, skipped playfully to the mantelpiece, and took from it the miniature of the chubby-faced young man.

'There, Peter,' she said, 'can you tell me who that is?'

'Don't know him!' said Peter, after due examination.

'You don't recognise it? Why, Peter, that is your own likeness, at the age of twenty-two.'

'Me! That fluffy-headed chap! O, come now,' said Peter, with a look of disgust.

'It is, indeed,' said Miss Pamela. 'And a very good likeness it was. Indeed, it is still, isn't it, Penelope? See, the very nose, and the self-same eyes.'

'Probably, my dear!' said Miss Penelope, with her habitual air of

gentle correction. 'Foreign travel may alter people a good deal, but it generally leaves them in possession of the same noses and eyes. But I agree with you, that Peter's likeness to the portrait is very surprising. I should have recognised him anywhere.'

'Fancy you not recognising your own portrait, Peter!' said Miss Pamela. 'However, you must surely recognise that other likeness (the one cut out of black paper, in profile) of our dear papa. Dear papa! What a vein of humour he had, hadn't he? Do you remember how he used to call Penelope and me (on account of our initials) his "sweet P's," and my asking him what he would call Peter, as he was a P too. I think I see him now, as he answered, with that ready wit of his, "What, Peter? why, green P—, of course!" And he broke out at intervals, all the rest of the evening: "Ha, ha! Very good! Green P—, of course."'

'I like peas,' said Peter, altogether ignoring the late Mr. Pimpernel's little joke. 'We don't get 'em over there, though; they're too expensive—it don't run to it.'

'I daresay the living is rather different from what we get in dear old England,' said Miss Penelope. This was partly in answer to Peter's last remark, and partly a commentary on his manner of feeding, which was somewhat peculiar. He was now eating shrimps with raspberry jam, and the sisters observed with surprise that it did not appear to be customary in India to remove their heads or tails.

At this moment a knock was heard at the front door, and presently the trim parlour-maid entered with a note upon a tray and a countenance brimful of some exciting intelligence.

'What is it, Susan?' said Miss Penelope, with dignity. 'And how

many times must I tell you never to come into a room without knocking?'

'O, please, mum, I'm very sorry; but I was so flustered I quite forgot it. It's the page-boy from the 'sylum, mum; and one of them lunatics has escaped, and we shall all be murdered in our beds; and he's a taking of 'em round to all the houses in the village.'

'Taking the lunatics round to all the houses in the village! What on earth does the girl mean?' said Miss Pamela. 'Explain, girl, for goodness' sake, or I really think I shall shake you!'

'Lor no, mum, not the lunatics. Only letters a-telling everybody all about it, and the best way to ketch 'em, and suchlike.'

'Peace, girl!' said Miss Penelope. 'Give me the letter.' And with the aid of her double eye-glass she read aloud as follows:

'The Priory, Dec. 23, 1873.

'Dr. Dollimore regrets to have to announce that one of the inmates of his establishment has escaped, and is supposed to be lurking in the immediate neighbourhood. He is quite harmless; and it is requested that any one to whom he may address himself will have the kindness to detain him (which may easily be done by the offer of some slight refreshment), and at once to communicate with Dr. Dollimore.'

'Good gracious, Penelope!' exclaimed Miss Pamela, as her sister finished reading. 'What a frightful state of things! A maniac wandering in our very midst!'

'No, Pamela,' interposed her sister. 'In the neighbourhood, but not in our very midst.'

'A maniac—a raving maniac! Good gracious, he may even now be on our doorstep! And we are requested to offer him some slight

refreshment. I'd *refresh* him, and Dr. Dollimore too, if I had him here.'

'Hold, Pamela,' said her sister solemnly. 'This is not a matter to be dealt with by two weak women. This is a matter for a *man*. Peter, we look to *you*. If this unhappy person *should* present himself within these peaceful walls, how would *you* advise us to act?'

Peter reflected.

'Give him some bread-and-jam and some srimps, and while he's eating of 'em throw a blanket over his head and sit upon him. That's what I should do with him.'

'What a thing it is to be a man!' said Miss Pamela. 'How prompt, how vigorous, how much to the point! I'm afraid, though, we should have a difficulty about the sitting upon him. He might struggle, you know.'

'I think we might manage,' observed Miss Penelope. 'Suppose we had Prodder, the gardener, ready behind the hall-door to throw the blanket over his head, and then we could push him into the china closet at the end of the passage, and lock him up till assistance arrived.'

'Excellent, Penelope; nothing could be better. But what a frightful experience for two defenceless females! Nay, not so! Peter, I beg your pardon. No longer defenceless, since *you* are with us. My gallant brother!'

'O yes, I'm here; and I'm a-going to stop,' said Peter.

'I must say I admire bravery in a man,' said Miss Penelope. 'Happily, women don't often need it. But there is no time to be lost. We had better have up the gardener at once.'

No sooner said than done. The gardener was summoned, and was instructed as to the duty expected of him. Mr. Peter Pimpernel and himself, each armed with a large and heavy blanket, were to stand

one on each side of the door, and in the event (which the sisters appeared to regard as a foregone conclusion) of a visit from the lunatic, they were simultaneously to make a swoop upon him with the blankets, throw them over his head, and hustle him into the china closet. Here, however, an unexpected difficulty arose. Mr. Prodder seemed to hesitate as to undertaking the required duty. Miss Pamela's small figure appeared to grow almost gigantic as she inquired with withering scorn,

'What, *afraid*, Prodder? A *man*, and *afraid*!'

'Well, no, mum, it ain't exactly that; but I'm always a advocate for a man a-stickin' to his spear. Always stick to your proper spear, says I. Now it do strike me, axing your pardin, ladies both, that harpoonin' of lunatics is not exactly the proper spear of a gardener. Fruit or vegetables or flowers, or even a handy job about the house, I don't say nothin' of wot-somdever; but when it comes to lunatics, why, it ain't a line of dooty that I lays myself out for, and I don't know that I feel equal to undertakin' of it.'

Here Mr. Prodder paused in a shamefaced manner, and rubbed his mouth pensively with the back of his hand. This last gesture was a ray of light. The sisters knew that it always indicated extreme thirst.

'I understand you, Prodder,' said Miss Penelope, with cutting sarcasm. 'Perhaps you would feel more equal to the occasion if you were permitted to gratify your morbid thirst for beer. Be it so. Susan, draw a jug of beer—a *large* jug.'

'Two jugs,' said Peter.

Mr. Prodder brightened visibly. And remarking *sotto voce* that it was a 'rum start,' but he 'wasn't noways particular if there was a

drop o' somethin' hanging to it,' he betook himself to the kitchen till his services should be required, though with a private conviction that they were not likely to be wanted. In this, however, he was doomed to be mistaken; for scarcely had the two blankets been brought down-stairs and placed in the hall, than a rat-tat-tat of a timorous and uncertain character was heard at the front door. Miss Pamela remarked that she should know that was a lunatic's knock anywhere. Peter and the gardener took up their positions in their respective corners and spread their blankets before them. The gardener's face wore its usual expression of beery apathy, as though capturing lunatics was as everyday an occupation as potting geraniums. Peter's, on the contrary, wore an expression of mischievous amusement.

Susan opened the door. A smart-looking elderly gentleman, in a white hat and waistcoat and with a flower in his buttonhole, said, 'This is the Misses Pimpernels', I think?' and stepped jauntily within the hall.

No sooner had he done so, however, than a heavy blanket descended on him from either side, crushing the white hat down over his eyebrows. Susan opened the china-closet door, and before the unhappy lunatic could even struggle to free himself he was hustled violently therein and the door locked, leaving him in total darkness, with two blankets still over his head and crockery and household stores on every side of him.

'Admirably done!' said Miss Pamela, who with her sister had been lying in ambush behind the drawing-room door. 'Beautifully done! Susan, give Prodder as much beer as ever he likes. Peter, you have done splendidly. Embrace your sister, my noble boy!'

The noble boy embraced his sister accordingly, though without any appearance of enthusiasm.

'And me also,' said Penelope, taking off her double eyeglass to receive Peter's embrace, which was again delivered very calmly.

Meanwhile the captive in the china closet was struggling violently to free himself from his embarrassing drapery, and apparently doing considerable damage in his struggles to the contents of the shelves. Suddenly a tremendous crash was heard.

'Good gracious!' said Miss Penelope. 'There goes the second-best tea-service! Dear, dear; and that must be the large jar of pickled cabbage! The man will certainly kill himself. He'll have all that row of marmalade-pots down on his head in a minute! What frightful language!'

The inmate of the cupboard had apparently by this time partially freed himself from his blankets, and was kicking violently at the door, mingling strong language in the vernacular with exclamations in some unknown tongue.

'How sad to hear him!' said Miss Pamela. 'I daresay a noble mind is here o'erthrown. And you see he has even lost the control of his speech, and can only talk that unintelligible gibberish.'

'Lor, ma'am, is that the lunatic's language?' exclaimed Susan. 'O, ain't it enough to make your blood stand on end!'

'Pamela, my dear,' said Miss Penelope, 'come into the drawing-room. I am very sure this is not the kind of language (even though, fortunately, we cannot understand it) for your innocent ears. And you, Susan, run across to Dr. Dolimore at the Priory, and tell him we have caught the lunatic, and will he please send several strong men to fetch him away *at once*, or we sha'n't have a tea-cup left.

Come, Pamela! Why, where's Peter?

Peter had vanished, but was discovered in the kitchen, drinking beer with Mr. Prodder and listening with much apparent interest to that gentleman's description of a new method of planting potatoes. He was tenderly reproached for his desertion, and carried off to the drawing-room again, the door being carefully shut in order to exclude the ravings of the imprisoned lunatic, who was still making frantic efforts to escape from durance. By way of further covering the painful sound, Miss Pamela volunteered to sing a song, and gave 'The Forsaken' with great effect; the only drawback being an unfortunate tendency to miss a note altogether every now and then, giving a sort of wheezy gasp instead, like a broken-winded accordion.

'You don't find my voice what it was, I daresay, Peter?' said Miss Pamela, when she had concluded.

'No, I daresay it ain't what it was,' replied Peter. 'But, lor, we ain't none of us what we was. Anyhow, we don't keep so.'

'Will *you* oblige, Peter?' said Miss Penelope, a little disappointed at this qualified praise of her sister's performance. 'You used to sing very nicely as a boy. O, dear, what a noise that poor man makes!'

'I only know one song,' said Peter. 'It's called "Down in the Valley where the Daisies grow." I'll sing you that, if you like?'

Accordingly Peter seated himself at the piano. His attitude was peculiar. He placed himself astride on the music-stool as if it had been a horse, his legs dangling down on either side. He then began to sing with a thin cracked voice, and with a noble independence of time and tune, at the same time accompanying himself

with one finger. When he had got to the end of the first verse, he sang it right through again; and was about to do so a third time, when Miss Penelope, whose nerves were unequal to the continued strain upon them, mildly suggested,

'My dear Peter, surely you have sung that same verse already?'

'Well, and what if I have?' said Peter, somewhat offended. 'It's a very pretty verse, ain't it?'

Miss Penelope was scarcely prepared for this view of the matter.

'Well, certainly—' she began.

But the sentence was never doomed to be completed. There was a gentle tap at the door, and Susan entered, saying,

'Please, ma'am, a gentleman from the 'sylum.'

She was followed by a thick-set good-tempered looking man in a gray tweed suit, who nodded familiarly to the supposed Peter Pimpernel.

'Servant, ladies, and much obliged to you for lendin' a hand in recapturing this troublesome warmint of ours. You're a artful dog, Simmons, now, ain't yer?'

Miss Pamela drew herself up to her full height (of four feet three) and looked daggers at the rash speaker.

'Sir!' she said, in a tone like the celebrated 'whisper' of Mrs. Siddons, 'you are under some extraordinary mistake. This is Mr. Peter Pimpernel, our brother, who has just returned from India. The unhappy person of whom you are in search is locked up in our china-closet. In fact, you can hear him now.'

The keeper looked from one to another in blank amazement.

'There's a pair on 'em, then. But, axing your pardon, ladies, if there's a mistake in the case it's on your side. That chap's name ain't

Pimpernel, nor yet Peter. His name is Samuel Simmons, and till he went off his head about two years ago, he kep' a cheesemonger's shop in the Tottenham-court-road. And he's one of the artfullest loonies we've got. This is the third time he has escaped; but he never goes further than the first place where he can get something to eat and drink. Come, Simmons, own up; and tell the ladies you've been making fools of 'em. Long-lost brother, indeed! Why, he'd pretend he was anybody's mother, if there was anything to be got by it.'

The supposed Peter Pimpernel stood with his thumb in his mouth, looking sheepishly at the warder.

'It wasn't my fault, Mr. Bradbury. It was them as did it. They stuffed me up as I was their long-lost brother, and I didn't see I had any call to say different. But I ain't done nothing!'

Here the victim of mistaken identity began to cry.

Miss Penelope pressed her handkerchief to her eyes.

'O Pamela, what a cruel deception! However shall we survive it?'

'O, we shall survive it fast enough,' said Miss Pamela, who was somewhat quick-tempered, and whose first feeling was that of extreme annoyance. 'But, Penelope, a frightful thought strikes me. If *this* is the lunatic, *whom have we got in the china closet?*'

'Can it be—?' shrieked Miss Penelope. 'Yes, Pamela, it *must*. Can he ever forgive us? Our real long-lost brother comes to us after twenty years' absence, and we throw a blanket over his head and put him in a cupboard.'

'Hadn't you better let him out, then, ma'am?' suggested the keeper. 'The gentleman don't seem to take kindly to the accommodation provided for him, and when you come

to think of it, perhaps it is a little trying to the feelings.'

'This person is right, Pamela,' said Miss Penelope. 'The door certainly *ought* to be opened; but who is to do it? I must own I could never meet our brother's justly offended gaze under such circumstances.'

'Lor, ma'am, don't let that trouble you,' said Bradbury. 'I'll open it with pleasure.'

He did so accordingly, revealing a perfect chaos of blankets, tea-trays, preserve pots, and broken crockery, from the midst of which rushed out the imprisoned inmate, his hair dishevelled, his cravat awry, his coat torn, his features swollen, and his whole frame working with excitement. His unconscious personator, Simmons, was the first person he caught sight of. He made a frantic rush at him, caught him by the collar, and began shaking and pummelling him furiously, at the same time using what appeared to be frightfully bad language in some foreign tongue, till the victim was rescued by the strong arm of Mr. Bradbury.

'Come, I say, sir, you'll addle him worse than he's addled already, which 'ud be a pity, goodness knows. There's been a bit of a mistake, but shaking won't mend it. However, if you want to shake anybody, shake *me*!'

The invitation was well-meant, but from the relative size and strength of the two men, it was like inviting a very small terrier to shake a very big bull-dog. Profit ing by the momentary interruption, Miss Pamela cried, 'Penelope, do as I do.' She flung herself on her knees at her brother's feet, and clasping him round the right leg, said, 'O, Peter, can you ever forgive us?'

Mr. Pimpernel shook his leg free rather roughly. 'None of

that, thank you, old lady,' he said. 'And the quicker I get out of this confounded house, the better I shall like it.'

Miss Pamela quite shrieked. 'He calls me *old lady*, Penelope. He doesn't know his own sister, his own little Pamela.' And she forthwith went off into violent hysterics.

'What?' said her brother, 'this Pamela? Then you must be Penelope,' turning to his elder sister. 'I don't wonder you didn't recognise me, for I certainly shouldn't have recognised you. I thought I had come to the wrong house; in fact, I'll be hanged if I know what I thought. But why on earth did you put me in that infernal cupboard? And who the devil are these persons?' indicating Mr. Simmons and the keeper.

'If you'll allow me, ma'am?' interrupted Mr. Bradbury, 'I'll remove Mr. Simmons at once, and leave you to settle matters with this good gentleman. Now, Simmons, come along. Ah, up to your old tricks again, are you?'

Mr. Simmons had taken advantage of the general excitement to partake of a little more refreshment. He had just taken a bite out of a cold muffin, but finding Mr. Bradbury's eye upon him, hastily dropped the remainder into his hat, which he forthwith put on his head, and the pair departed.

It took some little time to explain matters clearly to Mr. Pimpernel, who was, not unnaturally, much incensed by his peculiar reception. But though somewhat irascible, he was not only of a naturally forgiving temperament, but possessed of a keen sense of humour, and in the midst of his sisters' tearful recital the absurdity

of the whole affair struck him so vividly that he suddenly passed, without the slightest warning, from dignified sulks into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, which continued, with but momentary intervals, for nearly a quarter of an hour, causing his sisters to entertain apprehensions of apoplexy, and finally leaving him completely exhausted. Meanwhile, the distress of his sisters at their unfortunate mistake was unmistakable, and the many familiar objects around excited very tender memories of early days, when he and these two now faded sisters had been boy and girls together. As soon as he recovered breath enough to speak, he said, 'Never mind, girls; accidents will happen, even in the best regulated families. Let's kiss and be friends, and say no more about it. I'm very glad to be back again in dear old England once more, and to find you alive and well to welcome me, though you took such a curious way of doing it. Hush, not a word, or you'll send me off again, and I really am not equal to laughing any more. All's well that ends well, and if you are satisfied by this time that I am not a lunatic, we'll see if we can't spend a very merry Christmas together.'

'Dear, dear brother!' said Miss Pamela, 'how good and forgiving of you. And now do let us give you a cup of tea. I'm sure you must be dying for it. Good gracious, Penelope, there isn't a single shrimp left!'

And there wasn't. For Mr. Samuel Simmons, who, though a lunatic, was clearly not such a fool as he looked, had carried them all away in his pocket-handkerchief.

ODD EXPERIENCES OF CHRISTMASTIDE.

At all times I am fond of haunting the London streets. At certain seasons I am especially fond of London pedestrianism. I need hardly say that the special brightness and cheerfulness of the streets at Christmastide are exceedingly attractive to me. After that mid-day rest and lethargy which pervade even the London streets to an appreciable extent, there is a fresh stirring into life, as the whole line of illumination suddenly stretches from shop to shop all through the streets; the crowd, in fresh life, fresh numbers, pass to and fro along the pavement. What a crowd of boys and girls are on the pavement! They are pouring out of places of entertainment—fresh from the concert, the lecture-room, the Polytechnic, the afternoon theatre performance—they are accompanying their mothers, who are giving mighty orders at shops and stores; they are laden with presents from right-minded uncles and fond fathers. It is easy to see that these tall lustrous-eyed school-girls are home for their holidays, and are contemplating the Arabian wonders behind the thick plate glass. There is something cheering even in the thick British fog as it is penetrated by the lights, as the flushed handsome faces come into relief before the windows, and then fade away suddenly into the obscurity. Men, women, and children all take their holiday; the only business which they know just now is the business of pleasure. There is a pause of relief as the old year wears itself away. Even the busiest people have broken the neck of their business.

If they have not sent out their accounts and made up their balances, that will stand over very well to the beginning of the new year. The hard sordid lines of life that mark the ordinary aspect of the streets are partially effaced, and there is a more homely, a more pleasant, a more vivacious life in the streets. London is looking forward to its Christmas-day and Boxing-night. I feel cheerful and elated, and breathe a Christmas benison on the whole human race.

I perceive that there is something special and abnormal in London at this time. I believe in Dickens's jovial Christmas giant, who scatters an invisible influence from his abundant horn. As I walk along the streets I am sure to meet sundry of my friends. All know each other's haunts, and are not indisposed to fall into each other's way. We all seem to be doing something at the shops in the way of game and fish and oysters. The shops are like groves, with fur and feather more abundant than was ever seen on stubble or in woodland. In ordinary life we are very busy, and do little more than exchange nods. But now we mutually proffer glasses of dry sherry at the club; and men who had uniformly preserved a dead silence, now plant themselves in front of the fire, and give utterance to observations. I sometimes leave these cheerful well-known haunts to dive into back streets and hidden corners. I like to realise the vast humanity of London. I love to trace the pervading influences of Christmas. It is curious too how many country friends you meet in the streets

about Christmas. I suppose that the Christmas-box, the best kind of *étrennes*, is thought to be purchased best in London. They say if a man does not wish to be known he had better plunge into London. I have heard the story of a man who quarrelled with his wife, and he took a house next door or next street, where he lived many years without her ever suspecting his existence. As I walk along the Strand this afternoon, I meet an old friend from Wales whom I have not seen for a dozen years. I get into an omnibus, and there I meet two friends from my own neighbourhood. As I get out of the omnibus, I nearly fall into the arms of a dear old lady who watched over my earliest youth. It seems to me that London is the great place for finding, and not for losing. I get invitations for Christmas parties in the country and for evening parties at home. If I go one of these Christmas nights, I am sure to meet people whom I never thought of meeting; and more than that, I venture to say, so small is the surface of life, that I cannot have ten minutes' talk with any party without discovering that he and I have friends in common. After all, the world is only a little world, and the surface of society much smaller than we think.

I notice some curious oddities in the streets. I don't think very much of the gentleman who offers me a tract, although I am sure his motives were kindly and well-intentioned. One day I saw a tract-distributor on the top of an omnibus scattering his tracts on the right hand and on the left. He was certainly sowing his seed in a very broadcast fashion. I take a great fancy to that benevolent old gentleman, who, seeing two bright-eyed eager boys staring in at a window on the Christmas

serials, invites them to walk in and choose a book apiece for themselves. That is a kind of Christmas-box which a kind-hearted stranger might offer and any lad accept. There is a similar old gentleman who, in the plenitude of his Christmas feelings, is regaling some lads *ad libitum* with real-pies and gingerbeer.

'Now, my boy,' said the old gentleman, 'what would you do with a new shilling if I gave it you?'

'I should save it, sir,' said the lad.

'Save it, you young miser,' exclaimed the old fellow; 'I am not going to give my money to be hoarded up.'

The boy was equal to the emergency, and at once expressed an entire readiness to convert it into mince-pies. The shilling was given, but I am afraid that boy's moral nature underwent a *bouleversement*.

Once I saw a gentleman offer a child a shilling.

'No, thank you, sir; but I am very much obliged,' was the answer.

'It's not enough,' said the old gentleman. 'I'll make it a sovereign.'

'No, thank you,' was again the answer. 'My parents do not allow me to accept presents.'

Once I was at a restaurant where a bright intelligent waitress was giving change for a five-pound note. The customer, whose appearance was not prepossessing, pushed more than one sovereign towards her, and said,

'You had better keep the change.'

The girl coloured up.

'Indeed, sir, I should feel that I had quite lost my independence if I took so much money.'

'Perhaps you will not object to my change?' I said, proffering the magnificent amount of threepence-halfpenny.

'Thank you very much,' she answered. 'I do not object to coppers, though I do to gold.'

Once I went into a little shop to get a shave. Those were the days of the old shaving heresy, from which I am now happily liberated. I used to pay a shilling to be frightfully mangled, but a friend put me up to a plan whereby I got a clever, clean, comfortable shave for the ridiculously low sum of one penny. My barber was a merry little fellow, reminding me of him celebrated by Beaumarchais and Rossini. With him there was a tall man, with hungry eyes and juicy lips, having a decided smack of the transpontine actor. As the little barber, after a few seasonable remarks, commenced operations, the big fellow said,

'It will be something like a Christmas goose.'

'It is a goose, sir,' said the barber, 'that I've had my eye on for the last seventeen weeks, and have paid up for every Saturday,' said the barber.

'Our friend here had better come in and have a cut,' said the tall man.

'By all means, cut and come again,' said the cheerful little barber.

'What's the damage?' I inquired, not that I had the least idea of coming in, but I thought that the remark called for an answer.

'Damage! There's no damage at all,' said the cheerful barber. 'Anybody that likes comes into my shop on Christmas-day and has a cut of goose.'

'You see, sir,' said the tall man, 'he does it to extend his connection. It is quite worth his while to spend a pound or so to give a free dinner to his friends once in a way. They remember it all the rest of the year. It keeps the business together.'

Now it so happened that on the Christmas afternoon I was in the

neighbourhood of my little barber. I had kept up to the intention of the Church of England, and had gone to Lincoln's Inn Chapel to listen to the glorious Christmas music, what time the shadows were deeply falling, and the majority of my fellow-creatures were in a state of roast beef and plum-pudding. I thought that I might as well look up the little barber. His notion was of such universal Christmas hospitality that it took my fancy hugely. So I dropped in at my club and saw the steward, a most obliging fellow, who accommodated me with a bottle of champagne and one of port; and not being due at my own dinner-party till seven in the evening, I dropped in at the little shop and proposed to study the condition of the people under a new point of view.

My barber looked a little aghast when he found himself taken at his word. But he was a man and a brother, and did not in the least rescind his hospitality. It is true that, for the purpose of facilitating operations on the goose, he had tucked up his shirt-sleeves; and some of his friends, which included the big fellow, put their knives into their mouths and made noises like beasts at feeding time. But they were sharp-witted keen Londoners, and their vigorous talk soon interested me. Moreover, there was a beautiful old lady, the barber's grandmother; and a very beautiful well-mannered girl, the barber's daughter. Her father told me that she was lady's-maid; and, as far as kind manners and grace and good sense went, she had herself a good deal of the countess about her. In fact she had been some six or seven years with 'my lady,' who seemed to have treated her more as a friend and companion than as a servant. Then there was a gentleman, by whom I was greatly impressed,

who promulgated a large number of opinions on a great variety of subjects with a clear finality of tone, who, I felt, ought really to have a seat in Parliament. It seemed that he was a waiter in some large tavern, where he frequently stood behind the chair of great men; and being an imitative kind of animal, he caught their opinions, and their way of expressing those opinions. The dinner was as good a dinner—in fact I defy you to beat that plum-pudding for lusciousness—as you would find on multitudes of tables in society, though deficient in plate and linen, and with another kind of conversation and ideas. My barber was as cheery as if the great barber interest had not received the deadly blow of the beard-and-moustache movement, while the waiter and the lady's-maid were my admiration. I produced my champagne and port, which proved an agreeable addition to the beer and strong waters. They opened up their minds to me in the most agreeable way, even the actor confidentially owning that he had an eye on the lady's-maid; and the real respect and deference which they threw into this freedom was really fine manners. It was noticed that evening, at the party to which I went, that I did not make a very good Christmas dinner. It must be put down to the goose.

Now and then I have had some odd experiences at Christmastide. It is the time of the most frightful contrasts between those who have and those who have not. Reader, always make a point of supporting Christmas treats for refuges, hospitals, and workhouses. One of those wintry afternoons a gentlemanly Frenchman stopped me in the street. He was in urgent, but happily only in temporary, distress. Could I accommodate him with a small loan? I said some-

thing civil about the courtesy which I had in my time received from Frenchmen, and did 'my possible.' He took my address, and promised to communicate with me. No communication has hitherto come to hand. I should have been glad to have had a line from him, if only to say that he had nothing to say. One wintry afternoon a poor woman begged from me. She told a gruesome tale. Not having the fear of the Charity Organisation Society before me, I believed it, and I relieved her. I believe that there is such a thing as the lore of the human heart, the lore of the human countenance, which tell a man, who tries to cultivate this kind of instinct, of the reality or non-reality of such cases. I took down the address; and though I really had no doubt of the matter, I thought I would verify her statement. The address was accurate, and every sad detail was strictly true. Burrowing about in those courts and alleys I came upon the traces of a gentleman who was doing the same thing in a much more efficient way—with pockets crammed with groceries, which he distributed to the old women. I found he was a man of high birth, and a member of Parliament. He certainly set a very good example of one way in which a man may go about the streets at Christmastide.

One hears very curious stories about stumbling against people in the streets. In the waning afternoon light a near-sighted gentleman stumbled against that well-known individual, Mr. John Smith of London.

'Ah, my dear Jones, how are you?' exclaimed the near-sighted man, stretching out both his hands.

'I beg your pardon, sir,' was Smith's answer. 'You have the advantage of me. My name is not Jones.'

Then came the raising of the hat and the hurried apology. Now it so oddly happened that the same men encountered each other an hour or two later in a totally different part of London.

'Ah, my dear Jones,' exclaimed the near-sighted man, 'I am so truly glad to see you. I met an old bear this morning whom I mistook for you.'

'I beg your pardon, sir,' said Mr. John Smith, with much dignity. 'I am not Jones, I am only the old bear.'

Let me here give a curious incident which happened to myself. On one of these Christmastide evenings, a day or two before the New Year, I accidentally stumbled upon a man who was under the impression that he knew me. Several times has this sort of occurrence happened to me. If I may digress for a moment, the same event happened to me once when abroad under very agreeable circumstances. I was about to take a ticket from Forbach to Paris. On looking at my purse, to my dismay I found that my coin had unaccountably thinned down. There was not enough to take me on to Paris. Then at this moment a hand was thrust forward belonging to a gentleman who was my *vis-à-vis* in the omnibus, and a manly voice exclaimed,

'Don't you know me?'

'No, I don't.'

'Don't you really?' in an astonished voice. 'I am Jones of Wadham.'

'Jones of Wadham!' I exclaimed, grasping his hand. 'How d'ye do, old man? Can you lend me some money?'

'With pleasure!' exclaimed Jones of Wadham, producing his purse; and I forthwith extracted what I wanted, which was honestly returned.

Another gentleman whom I

met in London greeted me with effusion.

'Mr. Bobus,' he was good enough to say, 'I am so delighted to meet you once more.'

'You are very kind; but upon my honour I do not remember ever to have set eyes upon you before.'

'O yes, you do. I was a fellow commoner at Trinity; and you dined one day at our high table at audit-time, and we got on very well together.'

It suddenly flashed across my mind that possibly that audit ale might have had something to do with it. Anyhow it is impossible to resist the kindness of a man who volunteers his acquaintance in a cheery manner and from the kindest motives.

'Now, look here, my friend,' he continued, 'I am off to the Continent to-morrow. Going to spend the winter in India, for the sake of the climate and of shooting some large game. Come and dine with me at my aunt's. She has the Austrian ambassador dining there and two or three people whom you would like to meet.'

It so happened that I had no engagement that evening, at least none that I could not throw over. I keep a locker at the club, and while my friend was imbibing a glass of sherry, I arrayed myself in evening costume.

We drove rapidly; and the hansom stopped at the door of a big house in a big square. My friend hurried me up to his room, the picture of magnificent comfort, with a bright fire burning in the grate. He showed me his guns and revolvers, his ammunition and gear, and some of his letters of introduction. He sketched out his intended route, and had something to say about other men who had done the same sort of thing. When the second dinner-bell rang and we went downstairs, he had

omitted to tell me the name of his aunt. He mentioned, however, that she only had the house for a season, and had taken it from Lord ——, somebody whose name I lost.

The dinner was simply magnificent. Like the rest of the world, I sometimes sit at great tables; but I have always put down this dinner as the most sumptuous that ever came within my experience. Nothing was too good for the Austrian ambassador, and nothing too good for the nephew, who was going to start for India the first thing the next morning. There were one or two stars and ribbons. My new friend, or my old friend—whichever it is best to call him—naturally engrossed a very large part of the conversation, and so did a brilliant little flirt on my left, who condescended to waste on me a good deal of small artillery. There was not much talk. In about five minutes we went into

the drawing-room; and remembering the travelling preparations, and the family talk impending, I took an early leave. I have since recognised the man with the order as a great political earl now no more. From that day to this I have never seen my friend. I went a day or two afterwards to leave my card, but found that I had no distinct recollection of the place or the people. I could not 'spot' the exact house; I could not even recollect whether it was Grosvenor-square or Belgrave-square. I am morally certain that it was one of the two. This has always struck me as the most curious of my experiences in the streets at Christmastide. The only person who could shed any light on this little social mystery would of course be the Austrian ambassador; but his excellency has long left the Court of St. James's, and his high post is held by another very distinguished personage.

MY LAUNDRESS'S REVENGE.

'AND to think that I was once within an ace of marrying that woman!'

'What, *you*, Jack; *you* within an ace of marrying Mrs. Bostock!'

'It's a fact, my dear fellow, I assure you; the lady in question had a very narrow escape indeed of being made Mrs. John Sacheverel.'

The speakers were two well-dressed middle-aged men, who were leaning over the Park railings watching the endless stream of carriages in the height of the 'season.' And the object of their comments was a large, florid, coarse-looking woman, seated in a victoria, with a little, pompous, rotund, shiny-faced man beside her, who was evidently her 'lord and master' in the conventional sense of those words, though none knew better than Mr. Bostock himself how different the conventional fiction was from the actual fact.

After each had indulged in a long stare at Mrs. Bostock, the second speaker turned to his companion and said:

'Well, I must say I congratulate *you*, Jack, at any rate, upon your escape. But tell me, how was it? I never heard of that episode in your career, and yet I thought I knew most of your antecedents.'

'Let us stroll on, then, till we can find a seat, and I'll tell you.'

Having, after some difficulty, discovered a secluded resting-place, Mr. John Sacheverel proceeded to unfold his tale to the listening ears of his bosom friend, Charley Suckthorpe.

'I need hardly tell you, Charley,' he began, 'that there was a time

when I was desperately hard-up, about as hard up, by Jove, as ever a fellow was in London. I had decent rooms, however, and managed to keep up the outward appearance of a swell. I dressed well, though I had seldom a shilling in my pocket, and on the strength of my name and family connections I mixed a good deal in society, and cut, on the whole, a very presentable figure there. But things went from bad to worse, and my prospects were about as black as they could be, when luck threw Mary Campbell in my way. She was about five-and-twenty, an orphan with 60,000*l.* entirely at her own disposal. Moreover she was rather stylish-looking, and though decidedly vulgar even then, she gave no promise of the florid coarseness into which she has since developed. I took careful stock of her, and decided that with 60,000*l.* to gild the matrimonial pill I could swallow it. Having come to this decision, I lost no time in laying siege to the fortress. I was a good-looking fellow then, Charley—we were both good-looking fellows at thirty, old man, and we both flatter ourselves we are still, eh, don't we?'

'Speak for yourself, Jack; *I'm* not vain,' said Charley, stroking his well-cultured moustache.

'Well, as I was saying, I was a good-looking young fellow then, though I say it as shouldn't, and I soon found that I had made an impression upon Mary Campbell. Then I began to make desperate love to her, and things went on swimmingly towards the inevitable proposal, when an event happened

which at one fell blow blighted all my hopes.

'I was at the nadir of my fortunes. I positively didn't know where to go for half-a-crown. I had pawned everything that my accommodating "uncle" would consent to advance money upon. My scanty wardrobe I clung to, and I could therefore still venture to show myself in the West-end, and still dine out or go to a hop without feeling ashamed of myself. But in the matter of linen I was terribly reduced. In fact, I had only one shirt that I dared to wear in evening dress. In despair I went to a shirt-maker with whom I had had previous dealings. I confided to this worthy tradesman enough of my position and prospects to induce him to supply me with a dozen new shirts. The day after I had solved the shirt problem I received an invitation to dine with the Pilkingtons in Chester-square, where Mary Campbell was then staying. I saw at once that an opportunity might thus be offered me of bringing matters to a crisis, and it was of vital importance to lose no time.

'It was on a Tuesday that I received the invitation to dine with the Pilkingtons, and the evening fixed was Thursday. I hurried to my hosier; he said he would do his best to let me have a couple of shirts by Thursday, but could not definitely promise. Thursday came, and brought no shirts. I had been wearing the only decent shirt I had left. There was but one thing to be done: I must send that shirt at once to the landress, have it washed and ironed, and wear it that evening. The shirt was sent early in the morning with strict injunctions that it was to be returned ironed and starched by seven o'clock in the evening sharp. A message was brought back to the effect that the shirt would be ready for me by the time named.

'At a quarter to seven I had completed my toilet up to the point at which the shirt comes in, and I sat shivering in my dressing-gown waiting for that indispensable article. Punctually to the minute of seven there was a knock, and my landress was shown in. She carried in her hand the precious shirt. I advanced smiling to take it from her.

"O, thank you, Mrs. Magee!" I exclaimed in my most gracious tones. "I am much obliged to you; it is exceedingly good of you to be so punctual."

'But Mrs. Magee met my effusive exclamations of gratitude with no corresponding cordiality. On the contrary, her hard freckled face—she was a big rawboned red-headed Irishwoman—wore an expression the reverse of amiable, one which I did not at all like. I saw that there was a storm gathering on her knitted brow. I was not long kept in suspense. The storm soon burst. Keeping the shirt well behind her with her right hand, whilst her left was lifted with a threatening gesture at me, she suddenly broke out with a torrent of words at the highest pitch of her voice.

"No, Muster Satchivel" (such was her hideous abbreviation of my distinguished patronymic); "no, surr, ye shall not hev yer shurrt till I've hed me money. I'm a poor widder woman; but I'm not to be imposed upon. Ye ought to be ashamed of yerself to keep a poor woman so long out of her money. You've owed me three shillin' this six weeks and more, and divil a bit of yer shurrt will ye get onless ye hands me over eighteenpence this night."

'When she paused for a moment in her volubility, I struck in with,

"But, my good Mrs. Magee, I cannot give you eighteenpence to-

night. I declare to you solemnly that I have not a shilling in my possession."

"Ah, git away wid ye!" exclaimed the irate Irishwoman. "D'ye think I don't know betther than that. Its thryin to chate a poor widder out of her honest dues ye are, more shame to ye, and you callin yerself a gentleman too!"

"My good woman, I assure you you are mistaken; if I had the money you should have it with pleasure. But I declare to you, on my solemn word of honour, that I have not a shilling at this moment in the world. Therefore I can't give you anything."

"Then ye won't git yer shurrt, sor. I'll have my money first, ye may go bail for that."

"But, my good Mrs. Magee, I *must* have the shirt. I am going out to dine at Chester-square—a most important engagement. I must have the shirt!"

"I must hev my money first. Sorra a bit o' the shurrt will ye handle till I feel the money in my fist."

"But I tell you I must have the shirt. Mr. Pilkington, the gentleman with whom I dine, is a person whom I dare not put off, whose friendship I cannot possibly afford to lose. I must dine there to-night."

"Then go as ye are, me buck!" cried the Magee, with a laugh of fiendish scorn.

'In vain I coaxed and entreated: I could make no impression upon that flinty heart. I thought of trying physical force; but a moment's reflection made me give up the idea as hopeless, for, besides the fact that Mrs. Magee would unquestionably prove a very formidable antagonist, I foresaw that the shirt would certainly suffer to such an extent in the conflict as to make it worthless even if I succeeded in wresting it from the

tenacious grasp of the foe. Having exhausted all my blandishments I sat down sullen and disconsolate in my arm-chair, and with gloomy majesty bade Mrs. Magee leave the room. Discharging a few bitter Parthian shafts in her retreat, that monstrous female withdrew. I thought I had done with her when the door slammed behind her; but I was mistaken. I had not fathomed the depths of revengeful malice in the female heart.

'Well, you may imagine what a wretched evening I spent. I had not a sixpence to enable me to despatch a messenger with a polite fiction to account for my absence. I knew that it would be discussed and commented upon by every one there. I thought that Mary Campbell would be annoyed, perhaps sulky, unless (distracting thought!) some other gallant usurped my place and paid the attentions which I alone had a right to pay. I little guessed *how* I was discussed and commented upon. If I had I am certain that I should then and there have put an end to my existence.

'The next day I was on my way to the Pilkingtons' to make my apologies, when I met little Roberts of the War Office. I happened casually to let out whither I was bound. There was a curious expression on Roberts's face as he looked at me and said,

"I was dining there last night."

"O, indeed," I replied. "I was to have dined there too, but was unfortunately detained. I am just going now to make my apologies."

'Roberts still looked very hard at me with a peculiar expression which made me feel uneasy. At last he said, with some awkward and constraint,

"Look here, Sacheverel, I've known you a good while, and we've always been very friendly; will you

take a hint from me? Believe me, it is kindly meant."

"Certainly," I answered, looking and feeling considerably puzzled.

"Well, then, do you know, my dear fellow, if I were you I wouldn't call on the Pilkingtons to-day."

"Why not?" I asked in surprise.

"Because I think you would only place them and yourself in an unpleasant position."

"How so?" I inquired in amazement.

"The fact is," continued Roberts, getting very red, and looking exceedingly uncomfortable, "there was a disagreeable *contretemps* last night of which you were both the innocent author and subject."

"I! how could that possibly be?"

"Well, I'd rather not say."

"But, Roberts, I insist upon hearing. I shall take it as a very unfriendly act on your part if you do not tell me. For, upon my honour, I have not the remotest idea what you can possibly be alluding to."

'And then, Charley, he told me. I was wild with rage and mortification at the time, but I have long since got over that, and can laugh at the story as heartily as any one.

'This was what happened. Dinner was just over and dessert commencing, when a small parcel marked "*Immediate and important*" was brought to old Pilkington. Instead of waiting till at any rate the ladies had risen, he asked permission to open it there and then, declaring playfully that he was as curious as a woman about its contents; you know what an ass old Pilkington used to make of himself in these respects sometimes. Well, he opened the parcel, and, to the amazement and amusement of every one, took out *a shirt*, to which was pinned a note. Thinking this was some capital practical joke, old Pilkington opened the

note and read it out aloud to the assembled guests. The note ran thus:

"Muster Pilkington, sir,—Has Muster Satchivel" (again that barbarous mutilation of my honoured patronymic!) "owes me threeshillin and as only got this one shirt which I encloses and has I would not let he have this 'ere shirt till he paid me heighteenpence which he said as how he couldn't, I sends you the harticle in question so as you mayn't be surprised becos he don't come to dinner.—Your humbel servant, MARY MAGEE.

"N.B. Washing done on reasonable terms and a good dryin ground."

'Would you believe it, Charley, that d—d old idiot went on spelling through that beastly letter aloud, in spite of all the "hems" and coughs of his wife. Nobody knew exactly what to do when it was finished. Mrs. Pilkington and Mary Campbell were scarlet with rage, and every one felt extremely uncomfortable except old Pilkington, who laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks. By and by the old fool's merriment became infectious, until every one there roared except Mrs. Pilkington and Mary Campbell, who were both too much mortified and humiliated to see the joke.

'How I got over the shock I can hardly remember. My first impulse was to strangle old Pilkington and that diabolical washerwoman. In the end I did neither. I simply lay *perdu* in my diggings and saw no one. I could never make up my mind to face Mary Campbell again. Five years later she married Bostock, the retired egg-merchant, and I—well, luck came to me at last, and I think, old man, you'll agree with me that I have no cause now to envy Bostock or to bear malice against Mrs. Magee.'

FAR STRANGER THAN FICTION.

CHAPTER I.

MRS. CALOEY'S NARRATIVE.

THE most terrible day in all my life was that on which they brought my husband home dead.

While I have memory the horror of that morning can never be forgotten. It was a lovely morning; the sky was blue, and the sun shone down on the canal and the rushes, among which the ducklings were bobbing in and out. The fields were yellow with buttercups; the larks were singing fit to burst their little throats; the hawthorn was in full flower, and scented all the land. It was a cheery morning, and everybody was in good heart but me.

An hour ago I had been cheery too; exchanging friendly words with the neighbours as they passed, gathering our watercresses the while, and going up to the fence to pay my duty to the ladies walking along the lane, who knew me and stopped to say a kindly good-day when they saw what I was doing.

It comes back to me all as this is being set down in writing—the green of the earth; the blue of the sky; the soft flow of the water; the little swish and scurry of the ducklings darting after flies, rushing under the bank when strangers came in sight; the glory of sunlight that lay across the land, over the fields, over the wild flowers—what a wealth of wild flowers grow along that strip of waste land beside the towing-path!—over the water, over the dark pine-woods in the distance, and the blue hills in the further distance still.

Before going out to gather the cresses, I had stood for a minute in the little porch before our door, looking at all these things, and thinking what a happy woman I was. I envied no one; not the squire's daughters, riding past on their slim-legged horses; not Mrs. Grainger, wife of the great miller, as she drove by in her open carriage and pair of beautiful bays; not the young gentlemen rowing up the water in their gaily-painted boats; no, not a creature in all the world. I had a good home, a good husband, four healthy children; the prettiest garden, in a humble way, of any in the whole neighbourhood; such a dear little house, which it was my pride as much as my pleasure to keep bright as a new pin: I was still under thirty, and I had good health, and had tried to do my duty all my life; and I felt happy, ay, happier perhaps than the Queen on her throne. And it was most likely just at that minute my husband died!

I had not been long out in the garden, and, what with one interruption and another, I had not gathered many cresses, when I heard the sound as of some one running like mad down our lane. I lifted my head to look, for the bonnet was tilted over my eyes to keep the sun out of them; but before I could well see who was coming, Steve Henton, a young lad that lodged with us, had lifted the latch of the gate and stood beside me.

I opened my mouth to ask why he did not shut the gate after him,

but the first look at his face stopped the words on my lips.

It was not pale, it was white. He was panting for breath, and the perspiration was dripping from his forehead.

‘For the Lord’s sake,’ I cried, ‘what has happened!’

‘Your man,’ he said, ‘is badly hurt! They are bringing him here, and I am off for the doctor!’ And before I could ask how Ben had got hurt, or which way they were bringing him home, he was out of the gate and flying along the road again.

God help me! I must have stood dazed for a bit, I think. When I came quite to myself (I really do believe people can faint standing) the sun did not shine so bright, the sky did not look so blue, the rushes did not stand out so distinct as they had done before. In a minute, in a second, I had passed from youth to age. Since that time I have loved the blue in the sky and welcomed the sunshine; while I live in this beautiful world it will always, I think, seem beautiful to me: but the sunshine can never be exactly what it was of old; I can never again look up into the clear vault of heaven with the same untroubled heart I had of yore.

‘Your man is badly hurt.’ Yes, that was what Steve had said.

Badly hurt—my man, my Ben! I ran into the lane, and looked up the canal and down the canal, and over the fields that lay on the opposite bank, like one distraught. I did not know which way to go. Steve had come down the lane, but that told me nothing. I ran first a few steps towards the mill, and then a few in the other direction; and then I shaded my eyes with my hand, and strained them over the meadows yellow with buttercups, looking if I could see aught coming between the tall grass along the field-path.

If they had been working up near the junction, the field-path would be the likeliest way, and in the far, far distance I did see something dark moving slowly, slowly. I was so sure, that I set off up to the foot-bridge over the water; but before I got there, just at the bend of the lane, I saw some men carrying a burden.

It was Ben. I ran to meet them. I flew over the ground; I felt as if my feet never touched the earth. They stopped when they saw me, and one said,

‘He is badly hurt, Nell.’

He was lying on a hurdle, and one arm and hand had fallen over the edge of it. I pressed among them and took hold of that hand. Then they tell me—I don’t remember anything about it myself—that I gave an awful scream, and, crying out, ‘Hurt—he’s dead!’ fell all in a heap at the feet of the man who had spoken to me.

After that I was very ill. When I got a bit strong again, and able to sit up in bed with a pillow at my back, the funeral was over, and the house dreadfully still and quiet.

The children had been sent out of the way, and my mother was with me; and there was no Ben, no husband, on earth any more. We had never been cross nor snappish to one another; he was the best man girl ever married; he had kissed me that morning before he went away to his work, and I lay and cried when I remembered that parting till I thought my very heart would break.

But mother only said, ‘Cry all you can, my poor Nell—it’ll do thee good;’ for I had been out of my head for many days, and then a hard callous sort of way came over me, and I seemed to feel no more than if I had been turned to stone. So she was thankful at last to see the tears come, though

they seemed to tear at my life-strings as they ran.

When I was well enough to walk across the kitchen, she holding me—for I kept weak as a child—and sit in an easy-chair placed in front of the door, the grass in the meadows was all cut and the hay carried, and cattle were grazing where the buttercups had been; and there lay a blue haze over the further landscape, that looked like a thin veil hung between us and the pine-trees in the distance. Behind our cottage wheat was growing; and the ears were already full, and the grain ripe, and the harvest quite ready for the reaper.

But Ben would never see earthly grain nor human reaper more. I had cried all my tears, or I should have wept when I crept out into the sunshine once again. There were the flowers his hands had planted, the scarlet-runners he had sown, the potatoes he had earthed up, the roses he had trained—but where was he? There was not a bush in the garden but recalled some memory of the dead. The very click of the latch on the gate I associated with his outgoing and his incoming.

It seemed to me as if he could not have gone for ever; as if he must return, and come whistling down the lane and crunch the gravel under his feet as he came up the walk, and shout, 'Hillo! Why, Jimmy! why, Susy!' as the children ran to meet him, and clasped him round the knees and shrieked with delight because 'daddy had got home.'

I had no tears left to shed, and there was no wicked bitterness in my grief, thank God. I was sad and lonely and weak, but not desperate, when I lay back in the old easy-chair, with the flowers round and about me, and the air full of all sweet scents, and mother sitting

close at hand shelling beans for supper.

Whether it was my fancy or the way the light fell, I do not know, but it struck me all at once she had aged greatly since Ben's death.

What a mother she was! What a wife she had been! through what troubles she struggled to bring up her children respectably! Poor father was not a man like Ben. Often as not he never brought home a farthing of his wages. He was a good workman, but he drank himself out of one situation after another; and when at last he fell ill, she had to nurse him and keep him, all out of her own hard earnings, and finally bury him too with the money she made by washing for a few of the gentry round and about. I thought of all this as I looked at her worn patient face bent down over the beans, at her thin brown hands hardened with the honest labour of years, at her plain stuff gown, at the snowy handkerchief folded across her bosom; and my heart reproached me for all the anxiety my illness must have caused her; for having thought so much of my own trouble that I had never considered the trouble I must be giving her.

'Mother,' I said at last.

She looked up as I spoke, and, setting the basin into which she was shelling the beans upon the ground, she rose and came nearer, thinking I wanted my pillows moved or the shawl wrapped closer round me.

It is well mothers want no wages, or some of us could never even begin to pay them what we owe!

When she bent over me I could not speak; I could only take her hand and rub it against my cheek.

'Poor Nell—poor girl!' said the unselfish old soul softly. 'You wanted something, did you not, dear?'

I was still so weak that I could not well speak for a minute. I motioned her back to her seat, and, after she had taken the basin into her lap and a fresh handful of beans out of the basket, I asked the question I wanted to put before.

'How are we going to live, mother?'

She looked up surprised; then answered, 'Somehow, please God, Nell. What you have to do now is to get strong, and not to trouble your head about money and such-like.'

If a man had come in then to rob or wreck the place, I could not have found strength enough even to say him nay; so I lay back in my chair and looked at the flowers, and thought—no, what I did could scarcely be called thinking.

'If it is any comfort to you,' said my mother at last, pausing with a bean in her hand to turn towards me, 'we have not wanted for anything yet, and I don't think it likely we shall. Mr. Stannard came down here and gave me five sovereigns with his own hand; they got up a subscription among the men, and the gentry were not behindhand either. Ben was buried as I thought you would like him to be. After a fashion, no gentleman could have been better seen to. I wanted to pay Dr. Ranger; but he would not take a halfpenny. He said you and Ben paid him honest while you could pay, and he was not going to charge you anything. Beef-tea has been sent from the Chace, and there is not a farthing of rent owing; so rest content, girl.'

Ah, mother, mother! and you in your bitterest extremity had no subscription—no man helped you—you paid your doctor. And I—O, what a poor weak creature I seemed!

It might have been ten days

after this that we resumed the conversation.

She began it.

'Nell!'

'Yes, mother.'

I was ever so much better.

'You remember asking how we were to live?'

I nodded assent.

'Do you think you are well enough to talk about that now?'

'I think so. I feel quite strong—that is, I am getting to feel stronger.'

'I know, dear. Well, the way things stand is this: I think I must try to keep a home together, and you take a place.'

All the blood in my body seemed to drop back into my heart as she spoke. You see, ladies and gentlemen, 'home is home, be it ever so homely,' and I had loved my home—not as much as I had loved my husband, but very truly also.

'Can't we manage anyhow?' I gasped out.

'I am afraid not, dear,' said my mother. 'All the little money you had by you, all the little money I had by me, is gone. There is rent to pay, there are four small children to keep. The family is leaving the Chace, and the people who are coming will keep a laundry-maid. Then, though I am hearty now, I may not be hearty for ever. While I have my health we might manage; but when you get strong, I think we ought to look the worst in the face.'

I could not say a word. Indeed I don't think I had a word to say.

'You see, Nell,' went on my mother, 'I am willing to do all I can, and more; but if the work stops—and it is stopping, for the family at the Grange far more than paid my rent—what are we to do? It is hard upon you, I know, girl; still—'

I put out my hand and stopped her saying any more.

‘Mother, it was only for a minute. I will do whatever you think best.’

All my life I had done what she thought best, and I was not going to grieve her loving heart with objecting now.

‘That’s my brave Nell,’ she said; and she got up and kissed me, which was quite a rare thing for mother to do. ‘Mrs. Warford and I have been talking the matter over’ (Mrs. Warford was housekeeper at the Chace), ‘and she says what you must do is to get to know where your last mistress is living now, so that you may refer to her. Of course as to character, anybody about here would speak to that; but if you go as maid, it is not likely a lady would take you unless she knew what you could do. She thinks Mrs. Hume’s sister, Lady Poplett, wants a maid, and she would speak for you.’

My eyes travelled round the garden. Ah, me! ah, me!

‘I want to say something more to you,’ went on my mother. ‘It is just the same to me whether I keep on this house or my own; which shall it be, Nell?’

There comes a time when women are unselfish; but it is never towards their mothers, I think. At any rate I was not unselfish then towards mine.

She loved her little trim cottage, and I knew she did; and yet I stretched out my hands towards her deprecatingly.

‘He laid the water on to the beds,’ I said, ‘and it is only ten shillings a year the canal people charge us; and he planted the rose-trees and all the bushes—’

I could not go on; if I had been able, there was no need. She just crept round my chair and said,

‘Poor Nell, poor girl! The good God will help my child!’

She had been through much

rougher waters, and yet come safe to land; so she knew.

CHAPTER II.

STILL MRS. CALOEY.

WHILE I was single I lived as own maid with a lady of the name of Mason. Before I went to her I was servant to her mother, and called ‘parlour-maid;’ but indeed I did most of the work of the house, for we had never, to say, a regular cook till a few months before Miss Emily’s wedding.

I cannot say I ever was much attached to either my mistress or her daughter. The first, Mrs. Wilkins, was a mean, clever, managing, manœuvring woman; she could make a sixpence go further than any person I ever saw; and there was not a shift of economy but she knew and practised. The reason we had no regular cook was because there chanced to be so little to cook. Miss could not have dressed so well, and missus could not have afforded her stiff black silks, if the larder had been fairly well filled. No one would credit upon how little money that house was kept. I could tell stories about the meals there, which would almost, to those unaccustomed to such scraping and pinching, seem incredible.

Why did I stop, you want to know. Well, I was young, and I never cared much about eating. As for beer, I could not bear the sight or smell of it at that time. For my age, my wages were good. I had known at home many a time what it was to go hungry to bed; and the money I got was such a help to mother. My clothes did not cost me much, for Miss Emily gave me many a dress she had cast off. Besides, Mrs. Wilkins taught me everything I knew:

how to wait at table; how to answer the door properly, and announce visitors; how to make good coffee and salads, and toss up little dishes; for I had gone to her from a farmhouse, where I learned no more than my mother had instructed me to do at home.

So, although I was not, to say, fond of either Mrs. Wilkins or Miss Emily, I should have felt it hard to go to another situation; and when one morning my mistress said she meant to have a woman in to do the rough work, I could only manage to get out that I was very willing to do everything she wanted, and I hoped she had no reason to find fault with me.

'No, no, Briart,' she answered (my maiden name was Briart, and they never called me Ellen). 'I am going to try to do better for you if I can. You are clever with your needle, and I want you to take a few lessons in millinery and hairdressing, so that if some day Miss Emily should want a lady's-maid you can fill the situation. You have been a very good girl, and you have seen shortness with us; and if better times come, it is only fair you should share in them.'

I did not know what she meant then, but before many days were over I began to suspect she hoped to get Miss Emily married.

A gentleman began to come often to the house. For the first time I was parlour-maid in real earnest. I had also to trim and alter and make Miss Emily's dresses—things she had always before done for herself.

Sometimes there was a person had in to cook the dinner, and every day a charwoman was ordered to blacklead and scrub and scour, and do all the things that had kept my hands rough, and made them sometimes look not so clean as I should have liked.

He was a young gentleman who came, and very rich, we soon found out. I should not have cared for him much myself, and I am sure Miss Emily did not; but her mamma was set upon the match, and whatever Mrs. Wilkins set her mind upon was bound to be carried out sooner or later.

It was she made all the love, and not the young gentleman or Miss Emily. Nothing was too good for him. She made him think that every word he spoke was wiser and funnier and different from any word ever spoken by anybody before. Sometimes when I was waiting at table or taking up tea I used to turn hot all over at the barefaced way she flattered him, and the untruths she told.

I thought he must find her out; that no man in any station could be such a simpleton as not to see what she wanted.

But he did not. He thought himself very sharp and clever, and perhaps he was in some ways; but she was sharper and cleverer. He always said no one could take him in; but she did. He was vain to an extent, and she played upon his vanity. So far as I could make out he had not many friends, or indeed any friends, and no one could wonder at it; for he was ill-bred and conceited, and selfish and domineering—a person no lady could have loved, or gentleman chosen for his companion.

He was not good-tempered either: he had peevish fits and sullen fits, and jealous fits and angry fits; but Mrs. Wilkins bore with him through them all. If she had been a saint she could not have showed a better nature than she did when humouring his contrariness. He was greatly taken with her. He would have her to live with him and Miss Emily after the marriage. The nice dinners and little dishes did that, cook

said, and I have no doubt she was right ; for I never saw a gentleman so fond of eating, and who drove such a fuss about it, as Mr. Mason.

And he was equally greedy as regards wine. My mistress bought some very good and very expensive, and told him it was a part of a purchase made by her poor dear husband.

‘ You know, Mr. Mason,’ she said, ‘ Emily and I never touch wine’ (that was quite true, for they could not afford it); ‘ and so we have only used a bottle or so now and then, when we have wanted to give our best to a *particular* friend.’

It suited him very well indeed to come to a house where the ladies ate little and drank nothing. All the more was left for him ; and he used to let himself be helped to the last scrap of a favourite dish, and finish the final drop in a decanter, as if there was no one in all the world to be considered except Harlesdon Mason, Esq.

I never did believe he was very fond of Miss Emily ; but he was very fond of her mamma. He could have done, I fancy, without the young lady, but he could not do without the house. He liked the easy-chairs and the warm fires, and the snug meals, and the good wine and the old brandy, and the flattery, and the absence of all restraint, and the way he was made of and welcomed, and coddled up and fussed over.

Goodness ! if only his finger ached, the doctor had to be sent for immediately. Any one might have thought Mrs. Wilkins was his mother, the way she went on about his health.

He was not strong (‘ not likely to be, always eating and drinking,’ said cook), and the doctor told him he must be very careful, and avoid exertion and keep his mind quiet.

‘ And I know you couldn’t be

in better hands,’ finished the doctor, meaning Mrs. Wilkins’ hands.

The best friends, however, may quarrel sometimes, and Mrs. Wilkins and he had a quarrel once, when I thought all was over, and that Miss Emily would be left in the lurch.

It was something about the settlements. Miss Emily stayed in her room and cried, and Mrs. Wilkins’ temper was so bad, cook vowed she would never come into the house again ; and the charwoman was sent off at a minute’s notice, and I did not know what to do.

However, Mr. Mason gave in (the wedding clothes had been bought, and everything arranged, and a day named for the wedding, before the quarrel) ; he signed whatever it was Mrs. Wilkins’ lawyers wanted him to sign. I dressed Miss Emily on the marriage-morning ; and when they came back from church she was Mrs. Mason, and he looked sulky and she afraid.

It was not a happy marriage ; it might have been unhappier, only that Mr. Mason took ill a few months after they returned from the wedding-tour, and, though everything was done for him that could be done, died within the year.

No person could have had more attention or better care. He never seemed to give up completely till he ceased to relish his food. Before that, it appeared to us all as if he might linger on for years ; but quite suddenly he took a distaste to chicken and fish and jellies and grapes and beef-tea ; then he began to loathe the sight and smell of wines and spirits. A little lemonade, a small quantity of bread-and-milk, these and suchlike were the only things he would touch. One day the doctor said something to him about arranging his affairs, but he answered they were all settled long before.

'My wife will have everything she can want during her lifetime,' he explained, 'and that is surely enough for any woman.'

After that, however, Mrs. Wilkins wanted him to make a will; but all he said in answer was,

'There is no need to leave her more than the law will give her and my own folly has already given her. I shall sign nothing for the lawyers to fight over after I am gone. Hal ought to have a chance now. I wish I had done something for him sooner.'

I heard it all. I was in the room well-nigh constantly, but they never minded me.

My master seemed to like my being about him. Once he said to Mrs. Wilkins,

'Briart has been a good girl. I'd like her to have something.'

'How much?' asked my old mistress. She did not say, 'How kind, how noble, how generous!' in those days, as she had done before the marriage.

He thought a minute, and answered 'Ten pounds.'

'Very well, I will take care she has it,' agreed Mrs. Wilkins; but he did not seem satisfied.

'I will give it to her myself now,' he declared; and they had to fetch him his purse and open it, and let him put the money in my hand, before he rested content.

'You will send some of it to your mother, I know,' he said to me, looking up in my face with a weary smile. 'Ah, had mine lived!'

Now I never thought he had heard anything about poor mother till then, and it seemed strange in any case he should think of her; but many things were strange about him then. In the evenings, when Mrs. Wilkins and his wife were at dinner, he would tell me about the pranks he had played when he was a boy stopping at his

uncle's, and speak of a young cousin called Hal.

'I served him a scurvy trick, I am afraid,' he said once; 'but it might have been worse. You'll tell him, won't you, it might have been worse?'

I said I would if ever I saw the gentleman; but before I had finished saying so he wandered off again. Towards the last he was light-headed more than half his time.

Somehow that ten pounds made a coolness between me and Mrs. Wilkins; why, I cannot tell, for ten pounds was not as much to her then as ten shillings had been in the old days; and besides, it did not come out of her money.

Perhaps she wished he had spoken to her about it alone, and that she might have given it to me from herself, or at any rate, as if it resulted from some asking of hers. Perhaps she felt the end was so near, there was no use in keeping up appearances any longer; perhaps she was not pleased because I told her I meant soon to be married; perhaps she felt tired out. Whatever might be the cause, she never seemed quite the same to me after, though she let me take my turn in the nursing as usual.

He would not have been best pleased if she had not, perhaps, for even to the last he tried to be master; and besides, it was not for long. Before the year was out he died; and very shortly after the funeral my mistress and her mother started for the Continent. Martinly Hall, in Yorkshire, where Mr. Mason resided the last few months of his life, went to his cousin, that Hal about whom he raved in his illness. It could not have been left away from him, because of some entail that kept it and a few farms adjacent in the Mason family; but I heard the old butler say it would have to be let or stay empty.

‘Mr. Henry,’ he said, ‘will never be able to keep it up. All the land that goes with the Hall,’ he went on, ‘would not bring in two hundred a year. It is a pity, a great pity, Mr. Harlesdon was so foolish, but the mistake he made cannot be mended now.’

CHAPTER III.

STILL MRS. CALCEY.

As I meant to go out again as lady’s-maid, it was necessary for me to ascertain where Mrs. Wilkins or Mrs. Mason was living. A character for honesty, industry, and minding my own business, I could have got easily enough from gentlefolk who had known me when I was a girl and after I was married. But other points would be inquired about; and, having decided to follow mother’s advice, I wrote to the gentleman in Yorkshire who had attended to Mr. Mason’s law business, and whom I had seen often while we were at Martinly Hall.

His name was Ramsden. A fine-looking old gentleman, with white hair and stately manners, but still kind and affable, who had constantly spoken some word to me when he came in and out of the sick-room.

By return of post his answer arrived. The letter was not in the least what any one might expect a lawyer would have written. He said in it how sorry he was to hear of my trouble; that he remembered me very well indeed; that Mrs. Mason was not on the Continent now, but living at a village called Purling, not very far from London; that he had often thought of all the care I took of poor Mr. Mason in his grievous illness, and he hoped I would excuse his sending me a

couple of pounds to pay my fare to Purling and any other little expenses I might be put to. He also said, if he could at any time prove of assistance, he would be glad to help me. Poor mother cried when she saw the post-office order. She was astonished at his goodness, but the letter did not surprise me. It was just like him. He was always ready to do a kindness, and to put his hand in his pocket.

‘Now, Nell,’ said my mother, when she had dried her eyes and taken up her knitting again, ‘what you had best do is to go up to Purling. It will be far better for you to see the ladies than to write; and you know the housekeeper at the Chace said there was no time to lose if you wanted the situation at Lady Poplett’s. It need not cost you much; and if you don’t chance to find them at home one day, you can go on to London and sleep at your cousin James’s, and come back to Purling next morning.’

Purling was on our own railway, though a few miles off the main line; so there was no difficulty in doing what mother advised, particularly if I got up early and went off by the parliamentary.

But, O, with what a woful heart it was I stood on the platform of our little station, and thought of passing over the spot where my poor dear had met his death! He was a platelayer. That has not much to do with my story, but still it is a link.

I had to wait a long time at Clapham Junction before the train for Purling came down from London, and my head felt dazed with the noise and the journey and the shouting of the newspaper-boys and the sight of the people bustling by.

It did not take very long to get to Purling, which had changed from a village, as Mr. Ramsden remembered it, to a mere suburb

of London. Houses, houses everywhere—close to the station, running up and down the green fields, bordering the once pleasant lanes, where great elms still here and there dotted the few fragments that remained of the ancient hedge-rows. Why, mother could never believe this was Purling, if she came here, I thought; and then I asked a porter if he could tell me where I should find Alnwick House.

‘I don’t know it,’ he said. ‘Who lives there?’

‘Mrs. Mason,’ I answered.

He shook his head.

‘It is not hereabouts,’ he declared. ‘There may be such a place on the Common. Keep along the London road, and then turn a bit to your left, and that will bring you to the Green. Ask at the Black Lion, about a mile and a half ahead of you.’

I had not got down the steps, however, after thanking him for his civility, before he was after me.

‘Hi! hold hard!’ he shouted. ‘My mate says he knows the house you want. It belongs to a Mrs. Wilkins, though Mrs. Mason, her daughter, lives with her. It is on the furthest side of the Common, right across the Green.’

What he said did not surprise me. Mrs. Wilkins had always been masterful, and, though her daughter owned the money, it was just like her to insist on doing the spending. At any rate, it seemed as though I should not have my journey for nothing. One or other of them would surely be at home.

The further I left the station behind me, the pleasanter grew the way. Trees arched their branches over my head; in the wheat-fields the reapers were busy. Now and again I caught glimpses of a river; here I passed a great mansion; there I stopped to look

at some wayside cottage, covered literally—walls, windows, roof, chimneys—with ivy and roses and clematis. I walked slowly, for I was still far from strong, and a sort of peace stole over me such as I had not felt before since that glorious morning when the sun of my life went down so suddenly in darkness.

Alnwick House did not seem to be very well known. Any person who is at all familiar with the suburbs of London must have often noticed how little people trouble themselves about their neighbours, even in places that at first sight seem to be very rural indeed. I must have walked about the Green, which was as quiet as any country meadow, for a long time, had I not at last happened to meet a nice pleasant-spoken elderly gentleman, who directed me straight to the place I wanted.

When I got there, after searching vainly for a servants’ entrance I rang the bell of the outer gate, from which up to the hall-door there was a covered walk that gave a great air of privacy to the house.

A very respectable servant-man came down to the gate, and, in answer to my question as to whether I could see Mrs. Mason, asked my name.

‘Calcey,’ I said; and was going on to remark perhaps he had better say her old maid Briart would be glad to speak to his mistress, when he cut across my sentence with,

‘Mrs. Mason has been expecting you this hour. Come in, if you please;’ and he drew back the bolt and led the way up the walk into the hall.

It was a beautiful house, though not very large, and you could see right through glass doors at the end of the hall into a lovely garden all full of flowers. But I had not

much time to notice these things, for the butler, saying, 'You will find Mrs. Mason in the room at the end of the passage up-stairs,' left me to find my way there by myself.

For the minute I felt surprised; but then remembering Mr. Ramsden would be almost certain to mention that I had written to him, I could but think how kind he was and how considerate my former mistress.

'Making me as free of the house as if I had not been away from her a day,' I said almost aloud, as I ran up the flight, and, walking straight to the door at the end of the passage, knocked softly upon the panel.

'Come in,' a voice said; and, turning the handle, I found myself in a small but very pretty dressing-room, darkened by outside blinds, and sweet with a hundred perfumes that came stealing through the open windows.

There were two in the apartment, and at the further one, with her back towards me, a lady sat in an easy-chair reading. As I entered she raised herself a little, and turned her head slightly towards the door.

'I thought you were never coming, Mrs. Darcy,' she said. 'I hope you have been able to match that fringe?'

'There is some mistake, ma'am,' I began. 'I am not Mrs. Darcy.'

'You have come from her, then, I suppose? Has she got that fringe?'

'No, ma'am—that is, I do not know whether she has or not. My name is Calcey. You remember Briart, that used to live with you and your mamma?'

I was so confused I scarcely recollect whether those were the very words I spoke, but they were like them. As I finished she rose, and, with her hair all loose and streaming

over her shoulders, stood up, one hand resting on the back of the chair, the other, which held her book, hanging down by her side. I could but notice how thick her hair had grown, and how much comelier and better she herself looked. A ray of sunlight, which crept through a chink in one of the blinds, fell on her head as she turned and faced me; and I remember that it passed through my mind she must have been using some of the washes that were then in vogue to make dull locks look golden. Her hair when I had to dress it was a nasty drab, and now it glittered and glinted as the wandering beams played over it.

'I do not recollect you,' she said. 'What name did you say?'

'Briart. I lived with you as maid after you married Mr. Mason. I was with you at Martinly Hall.'

'O, I remember now,' she said; but she did not. I saw I had passed as completely out of her memory as if she had never seen me.

That was Miss Emily all over, however: the moment people had served her turn she could throw them off like an old glove, and forget they had ever existed. Besides, seven years had passed, and in six years a mistress often manages to blot other things besides the face of a former servant out of her memory.

'It is a long time since we heard anything of you,' she went on, and she spoke hurriedly and sharper than usual.

I said it was; that I did not know till the other day that she was living in Surrey.

'How did you know then?' she asked. Though she had grown so much stouter, I thought she must still be nervous; for even through the closed blinds I was able to see her colour went and came, and

that the hand she had laid upon the back of the chair shook as she seemed to lean upon it.

I began at the beginning, and told her as shortly as I could about the suddenness of my husband's death and my own long illness. I said I thought it best for me to take a situation; but that I could not of course get one unless I had a character.

'I don't mean for honesty or steadiness, ma'am,' I added, 'because the housekeeper at the great house in our village has answered about all that to Lady Poplett; but her ladyship wants a really useful maid—one who is able, as she says, to discharge her duties thoroughly and satisfactorily.'

'I see,' observed my former mistress thoughtfully. 'I need not tell you, Bryant, I will do everything I can for you.'

It certainly struck me as strange she should call me Bryant instead of Briart; but it did not seem any stranger to me than her whole manner. Indeed I was so astonished by her ways altogether, that I forgot to say how much obliged I felt to her.

'What is it you want me to do?' she went on, crossing the room and seating herself at a small writing-table. 'Shall I give you a note now to Lady Poplett, or do you think she would wish to see me?'

I answered that I thought a note would be quite sufficient; her ladyship, I added, desired me, if possible, to enter upon her service at once.

'Where does she live?' asked Mrs. Mason.

'Sometimes in London, ma'am; but for the most part in Lincolnshire.'

'O!' said my former mistress; and she drew a blotting-book towards her, took out some paper, and began to write.

'Let us see,' she exclaimed, pausing, 'if I recollect rightly you dress hair very well.'

'I always gave you satisfaction with yours, ma'am,' I replied, 'though it was not so long or so thick or so beautiful a colour when I had the handling of it.'

I could not have helped saying that if my life had depended upon my silence. Something quite separate from my will seemed to compel me to speak the words, though I could have bitten my tongue next minute for its freedom.

She did not appear to mind my bluntness, however; she laughed and looked pleased, and, turning her head round a little, glanced over her shoulder at the golden veil which reached far below her waist.

'I have had an easy mind of late years,' she remarked, 'and that is good for the hair; and I do believe caps make it grow. Look what heaps of hair our grandmothers all had; and their heads were always covered from marriage to the grave, to say nothing of in their cradles. Nowadays, of course, one can have one's hair any colour one pleases. I wanted to dye mine black, but mamma objected. You could soon change yours to a beautiful red.'

I shook my head. If she could joke about widows' caps, I could not forget who it was once loved to liken my locks to the raven's wing.

'Well,' she said presently, 'I have said you can dress hair to perfection—you must learn how to treat it if her ladyship is getting gray; then you get up laces beautifully. And what about needlework, and so forth?'

I felt I was going crazy. I had never got up a scrap of lace for her in my life, while a needle was rarely out of my hand for months before her marriage.

'I am a very good dressmaker,

ma'am,' was all I could say, however; and she wrote on rapidly for a minute or two.

'There, that's done!' she exclaimed, blotting off the note, putting it in an envelope she had already addressed to Lady Poplett, and finally handing it to me.

Then she leant her head back against the rail of the chair, and said,

'If I could afford to keep a maid now, I would take you myself, and not allow you to go to Lady Poplett. Indeed I feel half tempted to tear up my note and say she shall not have you, only mamma would be angry. By the bye, you have not asked after mamma.'

No chance had been given me; but I apologised all the same, and hoped she was quite well, and that I might be able to see her.

'I am sorry to say she is not at home,' answered her daughter. 'You must call the next time you are in the neighbourhood. I know she would like to see you. She has often wondered what you were doing. O, I have made such a stupid mistake in that note! Written out your character in your maiden name. I suppose I must write it over again.'

'It does not signify, ma'am,' I said. 'The housekeeper at the Chace knows me as well by one name as another.'

After that I stood for a moment uncertain as to what I ought to do. Clearly as I remembered Mrs. Wilkins' ways of old, it certainly never occurred to me that I should, after such a journey, be allowed to leave her house without being asked to break my fast; and I waited, not indeed because I wanted food, but rather because it seemed a necessity that it should be offered to me.

Evidently no thought was, however, further from Miss Emily's mind.

CHRISTMAS, '79.

'If there is anything else I can do for you, Bryant, be sure and write to me,' she said, taking up her book as a sign that the interview was ended. 'I feel so sorry about your trouble. I hope you will get on nicely at Lady Poplett's. Good-morning.'

And before I had well recovered my senses I found myself in the lobby, and walking down the stairs and crossing the hall and answering some remark made by the butler concerning the weather; and then I was outside the gate and on the Green, walking slowly, slowly, and thinking that Miss Emily, altered as she was in person, had not changed much in point of selfishness since I first knew her.

When I reached the other side of the Common, and was going along the side-path leading to Purling, I passed close beside a lady and gentleman standing at the gate of one of the red-brick houses of which there were several near the church.

The gentleman was a clergyman, and the lady, though her back was towards me, I should have known her for Mrs. Wilkins among a thousand.

For an instant I hesitated as to whether I should hang about a little, and speak to her when she was at leisure; but next minute I went on, feeling sure she would not thank me for waylaying her.

As I passed quite close to her I heard her say to the gentleman,

'No, we do not intend to go abroad at all this year. Dear Emily is now so strong, it is quite safe for her to winter in England.'

'Strong!' I repeated to myself. 'I should think she is strong;' and then it came into my head that perhaps she was staying in England in order to catch the clergyman.

I do not exactly know why I should have thought anything of

the sort ; only I knew every tone in Mrs. Wilkins' voice, and could have told blindfold if she was bent on any mischief.

CHAPTER IV.

A NEW SERVICE.

BENJAMIN CALCEY had been dead for more than a year, and his widow was still at service 'earning her living,' and sending home the best part of her wages, which remittances Mrs. Briart carried at once to the Post-Office Savings Bank.

In the little garden down at Dapplemead the cresses had grown and the roses bloomed and the honeysuckles scented the air—'just as though poor Ben were here to see them,' said his mother-in-law, sighing at the exceeding fairness and heartlessness of Nature, while in a large house in a by no means fashionable quarter of London Mrs. Calcey was spending a hot dusty summer.

She had left Lady Poppett's service, not for any fault of her own, or for any fault she had to find with her mistress. If fussy, Lady Poppett was kind ; if parsimonious, just ; if exacting, regular. It was not the work but the place which tried Ellen. She missed the life and freedom that had of late years fallen so largely to her lot—the sound of many voices, the prattle of children, the laughter of young people—and she gladly availed herself of the opportunity offered by a whim of her ladyship to give notice.

In the very dead of the winter-time Lady Poppett elected to go abroad ; and, though her maid accompanied her as far as Paris, and remained there till she found a Frenchwoman to her mind, Mrs.

Calcey soon returned to England, having said plainly that for no wages which could be offered would she stay where the sea and a long journey and an expensive system of telegrams separated her from the dear ones at Dapplemead.

'Well, well,' commented her ladyship, who, though she had no dear ones anywhere, was not hard-hearted or unsympathetic, 'it is natural enough, I daresay ; when you are forty years older, however, you will perhaps think less of others and more of your own interests.'

And having so spoken, Lady Poppett set herself to work to get her maid a very good place indeed ; not in a great family, but with gentlefolks, who, though somewhat unburdened with this world's goods, were a very joyous and united and pleasant household.

No time or opportunity to be dull or feel lonely inside those doors, I warrant, what with Miss Molly's piano and Master Jack's friends, and those growing-up girls Sara and Annie, and the young Turk George, and studious little Arthur, and Miriam the youngest of all, and the pet of brothers, sisters, father, and mother.

Before Mrs. Calcey, or Ellen as she was called then, had been with them a week she loved every member of the family.

She could babble to the little ones about her own children toddling along the banks of the canal ; and Miss Molly had put aside some old dresses for the girls, and her mamma looked over the wardrobes of her own boys to find some garments that might clothe the fast-growing country urchins' limbs.

Ah, me ! that was a kindly and a generous family. No servant left them with dry eyes, no friend parted from them unmoved. Lazarus at their gates had far more than crumbs from their table ; and it was amongst the legends of

the family that once their father had, during the course of foreign travel, lighted upon a certain man who happened to be in grievous trouble, and tended and succoured him till he was well.

This story Miss Molly told the new maid, with many pretty hesitations and mantling blushes; but she did not explain that when the stranger recovered he vowed, if both in the future were agreeable, his boy should marry Mr. Montrelle's girl. He had long been dead, but his project survived him. Some day Miss Molly hoped to become the wife of that son, long since grown to manhood.

What a delightful fuss there always was when the young ladies were bidden to a party! They did not go out to any grand balls, for they were not rich, and they did not visit except amongst their relations and intimate friends.

If dresses could have been ordered from some fashionable milliner, and gloves and shoes and ribbons and flowers had merely by writing a note desiring them to be sent in, the pleasure never could have seemed so great as when every detail was planned and thought over and talked about.

Why, by that means the party lasted for days instead of one evening; and then it was delightful to hear the little disputes amongst the girls—not as to which of them should have the best, but as to which should take the worst.

'I consider myself almost a married woman,' Molly would say; 'and you know married people should always dress more quietly than girls.'

'The very idea!' Sara exclaimed. 'I wonder what somebody would say, if he walked in and saw you looking such a dowdy. It does not matter in the least what we wear, as we are not considered to

be "out," but we must put our best foot foremost for you.'

'I have got a whole sovereign godmamma gave me, remember,' cried Annie; 'that is, I have lent five shillings out of it to Jack, but with the rest you must buy fresh trimmings for your dress, Molly. Wait till I am engaged! I shall then insist upon having the finest and newest of everything.'

They were all alike. There was no need for the father to dread bills being presented to him unawares. When the girls kissed him in the mornings, he knew their loving greetings were never intended as prefaces to a demand for money. Sometimes when he tried to press a gift upon them, Molly, as spokeswoman, would refuse it with a loving hug and tearful eyes.

'We shall manage beautifully, papa,' she was wont to say; 'and you have quite enough to do without our troubling you more than we can help.'

Which, indeed, was only too true. What with rent and taxes, and butcher and grocer and baker, and life insurance, and Heaven only knows what beside, the kindly gentleman had enough to do to make both ends meet. He never could have succeeded had wife and children and servants failed to second his endeavours.

As for Ellen, she would have done anything which lay in her power for any one of them. In her own cottage she had never felt more at home than she did in that roomy London house. The cook and housemaid had been with the Montrelles for years—indeed, the housemaid had formerly been nurse—and, seeing that the newcomer was faithful and willing like themselves, they tried to make the place as pleasant to her as possible.

There was one thing they tried to laugh her out of, but tried without success.

At times she would sit either with empty hands or needle suspended in air, looking intently at some object which certainly was not present to her bodily eye.

'If it is your poor dear husband, or your children, or your mother you are thinking about, for mercy's sake say so,' urged the cook; 'only don't stare straight before you at nothing.'

'I am sure you are enough to turn a person's blood cold,' supplemented nurse. 'It would be better for you to talk out than keep your trouble to yourself. I have known sorrow too, and I am sure I feel for you.'

Then Ellen would take up her stitching again, and say, 'I was not thinking about anybody belonging to me, but I am sorely puzzled.'

'What about?'

'That I can't tell you; indeed, I don't know myself.'

'Nonsense; if you are in any perplexity, why don't you speak to master or missis?'

'They couldn't help me.'

'Then you must be a walking mystery.'

Ellen had been in the service of the Montrelle family about six months, when Arthur was taken very ill indeed. The doctors saved his life with some difficulty, and then said he must be sent out of town immediately.

Now there was no one except Ellen who could conveniently go with him, and accordingly she went with the child to Hastings.

After her return in the later part of the autumn, both cook and housemaid noticed Mrs. Calcey seemed stranger than ever.

'She must have murdered somebody,' said the cook.

'Or been crossed in love,' remarked the housemaid. 'Considering she is getting on for thirty, she is still very pretty.'

Yes, Ellen was a very pretty

woman, and her modest ways and soft voice proved wonderfully attractive to the other sex; but she had loved the love of her life, and had no thought to spare for marrying or giving in marriage.

'Ben would rise from his grave if I ever imagined such a thing, miss,' she said one day to Molly Montrelle; and her young lady answered,

'If you loved him as well as I do somebody, you could not imagine it, Ellen.'

The year was drawing to a close, and the Montrelles' mincemeat was made, the Christmas pudding talked of, the regulation turkey promised, when one morning Mrs. Calcey received a letter saying her youngest child was very ill indeed, and begging her to come to Dapplemead at once if she wished to see him alive.

In a minute after hearing the news the Montrelles were assisting her departure.

Mrs. Montrelle produced a five-pound note—and five-pound notes were not easily got or kept in the household. Molly asked,

'You poor soul, could I be of any use if I went down with you, or should I be only in the way?'

Jack ran out for a cab; and while Sara put on their maid's bonnet, Annie stood with a warm shawl hung over her arm.

'He will get well when he sees you,' said Arthur, sobbing; and cook and housemaid both agreed 'It is no wonder she is not like other people; look what a handful of trouble she has to take hold of.'

When she reached Waterloo another surprise awaited her. The first person she beheld getting out of a cab was Miss Molly's 'young man.'

'Why, Ellen,' he said, recognising her, 'where in the world are you off to?' and then, seeing her eyes were red and swelled with

weeping, he went on, 'I hope nothing has happened to any of your children.' Showing, as Mrs. Calcey remarked afterwards, that Miss Molly had talked about her and the children to him.

While she told him of her fresh anxiety he stood listening attentively, and, when she had quite finished, said,

'Now let me put you into a compartment, and I will get your ticket, and you must try to think you will find your little child better when you reach Dapplemead.'

She did not notice till he came back with the ticket that he had intended she should travel second class.

When she tried to remonstrate, he only said, 'You will be quieter here;' and turned the handle of the door and disappeared.

But when the train reached the junction, why, before she could open the door he had opened it for her.

'I do hope to hear good news of your boy, Ellen,' he said; and then had to hurry away and take his seat in the main-line train.

CHAPTER V.

ELLEN'S PERPLEXITY.

BEFORE Mrs. Calcey arrived at Dapplemead, a change for the better had taken place in her child's condition, and although the doctor could not pronounce him out of danger, yet he spoke more hopefully about the boy, and said that possibly he might be able to save him.

For days and nights the mother sat beside the bed, feeling with Jacob, 'If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.' But at the end of a week all cause for anxiety was over; and the little

fellow, weak but convalescent, was smiling in his mother's face, and playing with her dress.

At Dapplemead, however, as in London, Mrs. Calcey was subject to those fits of abstraction which so puzzled her fellow-servants.

When her child lay asleep she would sit for an hour at a stretch doing nothing, looking at nothing, but seemingly lost in a reverie. If at such times any one addressed her she would start and look confused, as though suddenly aroused from a dream. She said she was happy in her situation, and had no words sufficient to express her affection for Mrs. Montrelle and all the family; and yet she seemed unsettled and unhappy, alternating between feverish activity and idle depression.

Mrs. Briart had not been slow to notice this change, which she at first attributed to anxiety concerning the child; but she could not avoid seeing that, so far from growing more cheerful when the first pressing dread was over, her daughter seemed to sink into a state of greater despondency. She waited for a short time, thinking that perhaps confidence might be given unasked, for never before had she known Ellen keep a secret from her; but, observing no symptom of frankness, she determined one evening to broach the subject.

It was Sunday evening; the children were in bed; the fire had burnt low and bright; the kitchen where they sat was snug and warm; there was soup in a little saucepan on the trivet, getting hot for their suppers by and by; the *Pilgrim's Progress* lay open on the round table, and the place where she had been reading was marked by Mrs. Briart's spectacles. The light given by one candle seemed rather to increase the gloom than to dispel it. Leaning back in an old arm-

chair, Mrs. Calcey watched the glowing embers, but spoke never a word.

'You have got something on your mind, girl,' said Mrs. Briart, breaking the silence with an abruptness which made her daughter start.

'And if I have, mother?' asked the younger woman.

'Why, you had better tell me all about it,' was the answer.

'Perhaps if I did you would say you would rather I had held my tongue.'

'Try me,' advised Mrs. Briart. Then, as the other relapsed into her accustomed silence, she repeated the words once again.

'Try me,' she said; and she stretched out her hand, and stroked her daughter's hair with a touch that seemed to carry comfort in its quiet tenderness.

'Mother, I am very unhappy,' began Mrs. Calcey.

'I see you are, Nell.'

'I do not know what to think or to do.'

'Suppose we take counsel together, then, dear. Two heads are better than one, it is said.'

'But I do not want to make you uncomfortable.'

'I cannot be comfortable seeing you troubled as you are.'

'I think, mother, you will never believe what I am going to tell you.'

'I will believe anything, Nell, unless you tell me you are going to marry again; and I should be very sorry to have to believe that.'

The younger widow shook her head.

'I do not think I shall ever come to you with that story, mother.'

'Well, then, what is the story?' asked the elder woman impatiently.

'You have not robbed or murdered anybody, I suppose?'

'No; I have not robbed any one.'

'Who has, then, in the name of patience?' cried Mrs. Briart. 'For gracious' sake, Nell, speak out, and let us have done with it. All my life long I could never a-bear secrets and mysteries.'

'I am sure I do not like them either; and if I could only make up my mind what was right—'

'I should think no one need ever think twice about what is right; that must be always clear enough,' interrupted her mother. 'Come, child, let us hear all about it.'

'You know I have told you what a nice young lady Miss Molly is,' began Mrs. Calcey.

'Yes; sure, but it is nothing about her, I hope.'

'And what a pleasant, affable, generous gentleman she has got for a lover.'

Mrs. Briart nodded.

'But I have not told you his name.'

Her mother looked up interested, but spoke no word.

'It is Mason; he is that "Hal" Mr. Harlesdon Mason talked about on his deathbed, and he is the owner now of Martinly Hall.'

'Then he will be a good match for your Miss Molly.'

'No; they are so poor they can't marry at present. It seems that Mr. Harlesdon made some settlement on Miss Emily, which gives her three thousand a year for life; and as long as she lives this gentleman has nothing but the old Hall and a small quantity of land. These could not be willed away or settled; but master might have left the three thousand a year to his wife if he had liked, and then she could have given it to any one she chose. That was what Mrs. Wilkins wanted him to do, I believe, on his deathbed; but he would not. The way things are now is, that while Mrs. Mason lives he is, in a manner of speaking, a beggar. There is some

mortgage on the Hall; and there are expenses connected with keeping up the place. It has been let till lately; but the gentleman who rented it has lost all his money and been obliged to go abroad; so that really, as far as I can understand, the present Mr. Mason is worse off than if he had no property at all.'

'Still property is property,' remarked Mrs. Briart sapiently; 'and when Mrs. Mason dies he will have a vast of money; though to be sure she is as likely to outlive him as he is to outlast her.'

Her daughter did not answer. She only leant her head on her hand and looked into the fire.

'Why need you trouble yourself about it, Nell?' asked her mother, after a pause. 'After all a wife is a wife, and Mr. Mason had a right to do what he liked with his own.'

'I never heard anybody say he had not,' replied Mrs. Calcey; 'but it is not that which worries me.'

'Well, what is it, then?'

'You see, if Mrs. Mason were dead this young gentleman would be rich enough.'

'Of course he would; but he does not want to kill her, does he?'

'No; but I believe she is dead.'

The elder woman drew back a little, and asked, in evident surprise,

'When did she die?'

'That I do not know.'

'What do you mean, girl? Do you think there has been any foul play?'

'I am afraid so, and I am afraid it is still going on. I feel as sure as I am sitting here that Mr. Harlesdon Mason's widow is dead, and that the lady I saw at Purling is no more Mrs. Wilkins' daughter than I am.'

'I do not understand you.'

'Why, mother, surely I have

spoken plain enough. If Miss Emily is dead, that money ought to go to this present gentleman.'

Mrs. Briart sat silent for a moment; then she asked,

'Who knows of this besides yourself?'

'I do not think anybody has pieced it all together but me.'

'Then the best thing you can do is to unpiece it—a pack of nonsense, child!'

'It is not nonsense, mother; I only wish it was.'

'Well, whatever it may be, it is no business of yours; it is not a matter for you to make or to mull in. Let the gentlefolks look after their own affairs for themselves. If they are being cheated they will find that out fast enough, I warrant.'

'But you said, mother, one need never think twice about what is right.'

'And I say so again. If you keep straight yourself you'll have quite enough to do, without putting your fingers into other folks' pies.'

'But, mother, just listen to me.'

'I don't want to hear nothing more about it,' said Mrs. Briart tersely, if ungrammatically. 'Lot of rubbish, Nell. You have been reading some of those silly novels that are enough to turn a stronger head than yours.'

Ellen Calcey sighed. The experiment of taking another person into her confidence had not, she felt, proved so far signally successful.

CHAPTER VI.

RIGHT IS RIGHT.

MR. HENRY MASON sat alone in his chambers, situated on the second-floor of a house in Clement's Inn. He felt singularly depressed

and disheartened. The dull days before Christmas had come with a leaden sky and a drizzling rain; and dull times had fallen upon his fortunes, and one disaster after another seemed darkening his present and obscuring his future.

Not a post arrived but brought with it some contribution of unpleasantness big or little. There was nothing he desired he appeared able to obtain; he had but to stretch his hand out to seize any object, and, lo, it eluded his grasp. One appointment after another he tried to secure, but his endeavours proved useless. He thought over every possible way of repairing his fortunes, but without success. He had lit upon a vein of ill-luck, and seemed destined to work it out exhaustively.

There was Martinly on his hands now. He did not know what to do with that.

‘I almost think I will live down there myself and turn farmer,’ he said half aloud; ‘but if I did, I suppose the hay would heat and the weevil get amongst the wheat. I should have my sheep dying with rot, and the stall-cattle would develop some fresh form of plague. Were it not for Molly I would sail for the Colonies; but I cannot go away and leave her—I cannot.’

And he tenderly, as if already it were part and parcel of himself, took out a little case, and looked at the bright bauble it contained, lying so softly on the rich blue-velvet lining.

‘What a poor little gift it is!’ he thought; ‘and yet how pleased my darling will be to have it! I can in anticipation hear her scolding me for my extravagance. O Molly, I only wish for your sake I could afford to be extravagant!’

And he fell to musing, thinking how delightful it would be if he were rich enough to buy all sorts of rare and lovely things for his

pretty one, his good, true, brave, sweet little girl.

From this reverie he was roused by a knock at the door of his room.

‘Come in!’ he cried, and then stood up, amazed to see a woman cross the threshold.

It was in the half-light, that is so dim and indistinct during the winter-time of year, and till she came nearer to the hearth he could not distinguish her face; but the moment he did so he cried,

‘What is the matter, Ellen? Anything wrong with—with—’

‘No, sir; Miss Molly is quite well, and they are all quite well at the Square. I have come, sir, to speak to you, if I may, about a matter that has long been troubling me.’

‘To be sure you may,’ he answered. ‘I only hope I shall be able to help you. Sit down. And now what is it?’

‘Sir,’ she began, ‘I think you are being kept out of your rights, and that I ought to have spoken sooner; but, you see, I could not tell for certain—’

‘What could you not tell for certain?’ he asked, as she paused and hesitated.

‘Whether my old mistress, Miss Emily, was really dead and buried, and some one else getting her money in her stead.’

Mrs. Calcey stopped suddenly. The young man was holding her tightly by the wrist.

‘Take care what you are saying,’ he exclaimed. ‘I am not in a mood for foolery, and this is not the 1st of April.’

‘I am speaking the truth, sir, as far as I know it,’ she answered. ‘My mother advised me not to make or mull in the affair, for it was no business of mine: but when I came back and saw Miss Molly’s sweet face, and the children gathered about me with their pleasant ways,

I felt I could keep silence no longer ; so now, sir, you know just what I believe, and can act as you like.'

'I beg your pardon,' he said, releasing her wrist, and seating himself in his accustomed chair. 'Now tell me, please, exactly what you think, and why you think it.'

She began at the beginning, and told him everything through to the end. When she had finished he made no comment on her story, but, rising and taking his hat, said, 'Wait here, please, till I come back,' and then left her without another word.

She did not trouble or perplex herself about what he was going to do : the matter was now out of her hands ; the secret, whether for good or for evil, had passed away from her keeping. She had done right, if tardily ; and if no one else had done wrong, why, no harm could come of it to any person.

And yet never in her life, perhaps, did she feel so kindly towards Mrs. Wilkins. Never was the knowledge more bitter that through her this blow must be dealt, if a blow were dealt at all.

She looked back over her life ; she thought of her own small temptations, of how securely she had been kept all her days from the desire to commit any heinous sin ; and yet how often she must have gone wrong but for the lessons learned at her grandfather's knee, the patient endurance and unremitting toil of her mother, and the sight and knowledge of the stanch faithfulness and rugged honesty of the poor people amongst whom her childish days had been passed.

Since she had been out to service she had known little misses and little masters, whose hands were far more given to picking and stealing than the boys and girls with whom she went to school ; and in a dumb

inconsequent sort of way the idea assumed some sort of shape in her mind that to the peer as to the peasant it might be of the most enormous importance whether or not he came of an honest stock.

As, for instance, her mind ran idly over the scenes she had witnessed at Mrs. Wilkins' ; the mean shifts, the false actions and falser statements, the utter selfishness, the lack of all idea of responsibility here or accountability hereafter ; the scheming, the absence of all worthy motives, the utter disregard of everything which could not advance worldly interests or further some ignoble end.

What had Miss Emily ever seen or heard to render her a good wife or a noble woman ? what, perhaps, had Mrs. Wilkins herself ever seen ? How could one reared in such an atmosphere escape mental infection, any more than a person dwelling with foul surroundings could escape disease ?

And there could be little doubt that the woman who was now passing as Mrs. Mason had herself been educated to regard success as the only one thing needful.

Of herself she might not have been able to plan and carry out such a deception ; but she must, Mrs. Calcey felt, have taken to it kindly. Hers was the smooth skin, the calm brow, the quiet eye, the plump figure of one who was troubled by no qualms of conscience, by no remorse, by very little dread of detection. She looked prosperous and well-to-do, easy in her mind, with no fox gnawing at her breast.

All these things, and many more of the same kind, passed through Ellen's mind as she sat near the window, looking out into the deepening darkness of the coming night. She could not have given expression to them, she could not have put them into shape and form, because the

moulding and clothing of ideas are matters which do not come quite naturally to people of any rank in life, but least of all to one born in the rank Mrs. Calcey had sprung from, and educated as she had been ; but they stirred her very heart for all that, and filled it with a great pity and a yearning sorrow. She would have liked to save her old mistress from the consequences of her own act. She wanted to see Miss Molly's future husband righted and in possession of his own, but she shrank from the idea that Mrs. Wilkins would be punished and perhaps beggared. She had never honoured that lady's gray hairs, but still she could not endure the idea of their being covered with shame.

It was hard that it should have been all her doing, but she could not hesitate or draw back now. She had spoken, and could not recall her words. If she could, she would not. All she felt most grieved for was that she had kept silence so long.

Mr. Mason was but a short time absent. He came back accompanied by another gentleman, whose voice she recognised in a moment as it rang clear and hearty through the room.

'This is a strange way for us to meet, Mrs. Calcey,' said Mr. Ramsden, walking up to her and stretching out his hand as pleasantly as if she had been some lady of high degree. 'This is so odd a story you have been telling Mr. Mason, that as he seems rather confused I thought I would like to hear it for myself.'

And then he busied himself drawing down the blinds, while Mr. Mason lit the lamp, and pulled forward an easy-chair for his friend's accommodation.

'Now, Briart (the old name comes most naturally from my lips you hear), to begin at the be-

ginning of this strange tale : you got my letter, and then, as I understand, went to Purling and saw Mrs. Mason.'

'Yes, sir.'

'And it did not occur to you then there was anything wrong ?'

'No, sir. I was puzzled a bit, but I did not imagine there was anything wrong. You see, many years had passed since I left Martinly, and Miss Emily was ill and weak in those days, and poor master harassed and tried too ; and they did not agree, as you know, and she was always fretting.'

'Exactly ; and so—'

'When I saw her fat and well it did not seem to me so very strange that she should look different in some ways. As to her hair, the gold in it did not surprise me, because, as you have perhaps heard, ladies can make their hair any colour nowadays ; and though the length and thickness astonished me, still I thought she might have got something to make it grow.'

'Quite true. Then when you left you had no suspicion that you had not seen Mrs. Mason ?'

'No, sir. I was not quite easy in my mind, and yet I could not have said why I was uneasy. The thing that I have thought of most since that day was that she did not know me. No, sir, she did not ; and she did not to the last remember my name. When I told it to her, she took it up wrong, and called me Bryant and wrote Bryant ; still I knew poor Miss Emily never troubled much to remember anything that did not concern herself, and many people forget names.'

'Of course they do. And so you got the character you went after, and engaged yourself as maid to Lady Poplett ; and in the course of a few months you travelled to Paris with your new mistress. Tell us just what occurred there.'

‘I was sitting one day in her ladyship’s bedroom mending some lace, when I heard voices of people talking on the other side of the partition. The rooms were divided with wood panelling, and every word came as quite distinct to me as if spoken in my very ear. I might not have taken so much notice, only it seemed strange to hear English spoken in France; and besides, I felt as if I knew the voice.’

‘It seems you did too.’

‘Yes, it was my old mistress’s voice, Mrs. Wilkins. She said,

“We ought to leave here at once. It will never do to run the risk of meeting her at such close quarters.”

‘Then the other lady answered, in the slow sort of drawling way Miss Emily had of talking, and with her little lisp,

“You are sure you made no mistake?”

“Do you think I am purblind or doting?” asked Mrs. Wilkins. “I saw her going out with her mistress this morning. Mistake! One can’t mistake a face one has lived in the house with for years. She must not meet you again. I would rather run the gauntlet of a dozen detectives than of one lady’s-maid. There are a hundred little things they notice about one of their own sex a man would never see.”’

‘It was a true observation,’ remarked Mr. Ramsden, ‘and one which did credit to the old lady’s astuteness. Well, what did the other answer?’

‘They were interrupted, I think,—at any rate, I heard no more; but what I had heard excited my curiosity so much, I asked Lady Poplett if she would kindly ask whether a Mrs. Wilkins was in the hotel, and the number of the room. I can’t think what possessed me, for I am sure I did not want

to be mixed up with them; but I sent a message to say I should like to pay my duty to Mrs. Mason.’

‘Yes; and the answer?’

‘I had leave to do so; but I did not see Mrs. Mason then, only Mrs. Wilkins, and she was chatty and pleasant, to be sure. She was so sorry her daughter was out (but I knew she was not out), and didn’t I think her altered? She said poor dear Mr. Mason had been a great trial, and there was no disguising the fact his death had proved a great relief. Emily had been very ill for a long time after she was left a widow, and all that sort of thing; and then she asked lots of questions about what I was doing and how I happened to be in Paris.

‘I told her how I was leaving almost immediately, and asked if I could take anything back for her to England; and then she was civil. She thought she would trouble me with a small parcel, and she only wished Miss Emily was in; but she had gone to see some friends in the outskirts, and would be away for a few days. Before I started, however, I managed to make sure Mrs. Mason was in the hotel all the time, and myself unseen to get a good look at her.

‘She is very like Miss Emily. I declare, even after what I had heard, I could not have said for certain it was not my young mistress grown older, stouter, and better looking.’

There was a moment’s pause. Mr. Ramsden turned his eyes upon Mr. Mason’s anxious face; then he looked at Mrs. Calcey, and said briskly,

‘We come, now, to the time when you went out of town with Master Arthur Montrelle. Tell me about what happened at the lodgings then, please.’

‘I had not a thought in my mind then about Mrs. Wilkins or

her daughter,' answered Mrs. Calcey. 'I was troubled at having the whole care of Master Arthur, and yet I felt glad too. When he began to get stronger I did not stay in his room at night; and often after he was in bed I went down into the landlady's parlour and had a chat with her, or else into the kitchen; for the servant was a nice respectable young woman, well spoken and good principled.

'One night it so happened she had brought a little fancy sort of trunk—a kind of miniature trunk, small enough to carry about easily and set on a table—into the kitchen to look out some buttons she wanted to trim a dress.

'They had got scattered about among the other things, and she turned out several articles in order to find them more easily.

'At last she put a funny box before my eyes, and said,

"Did you ever see anything like that before?" Evidently meaning that I never had.

'I looked at it, and I looked again.

"May I take off the lid?" I asked.

"And turn over everything there is inside, if you like," she answered.

"Where on earth did you get it?" I said.

"A lady that is dead gave it to me," she explained, going on looking for her buttons. "It is more curious than pretty, I think; but I have kept it for her sake. Poor Mrs. Mason, she did suffer."

'Her words gave me such a turn, I could not see for a minute. Lamp, table, box, everything seemed to go round and round; but at last my head steadied, and there was Alice still hunting for buttons.

'I asked her to tell me all about Mrs. Mason. I said I once lived with a lady of that name; and she

told me all quite straight. How she was living in London at the time with a Miss Gresham, who let out apartments, and Mrs. Mason and her mother came up from somewhere in the country, so as to be near medical advice.

'They were going abroad as soon as the younger lady got well enough to travel; "But, Lor," said Alice, "she soon went a far longer journey. When the doctor came, he said she was in a galloping consumption; and sure enough it was all over within a couple of months. The poor mother did take on dreadful; it might have touched a heart of stone to see her. I heard her say one day to her daughter, 'I don't know, Emily, what will become of me when you are gone.' And Mrs. Mason answered quite indifferent like; but then she was so bad and ill that no doubt she did not care much about anything. 'It is unfortunate certainly, mamma, but it is not my fault.' There was no shortness of money, but they seemed friendless and all alone in the world. Not a soul came to see them, and not a creature 'followed' but the mother."'

'Humph!' said Mr. Ramsden dryly. 'Do you happen to remember, Briart, where this Miss Gresham lived?'

'I took it all down, sir, as I got it from Alice—leastways I wrote it in a book when I got to my own room. The name of the street and the number, the address of the doctor—everything you will find set down here, sir;' and Mrs. Calcey handed him an old diary bound in red morocco, which had been given to her years and years previously.

'You have no idea, I suppose,' asked Mr. Ramsden, as he took the book from her, 'who this lady is that you suppose cannot be Miss Emily, otherwise Mrs. Mason?'

‘Yes, sir, I have,’ was the unexpected reply; ‘and that came about in a most curious way too. A mate of my poor dear husband’s was born and reared in that part of the country where all the Wilkinses belonged. He used to lodge with us, and many a time has talked about Mrs. Wilkins and her mean ways, and Miss Emily, afterwards Mrs. Mason. He remembered her from a child.’

‘Well, after I came to London to Mr. Montrelle’s, I saw him two or three times at my cousin’s, and once he chanced to say he had been working on the line near Purling; and at church there he had seen my former mistress, Mrs. Wilkins.’

“And Mrs. Mason too, I suppose?” I said.

“No,” he answered; “she was not there, but her cousin was—old Mat Wilkins’ daughter: she would make two of Miss Emily, and has the loveliest head of hair you ever looked at.”

‘I asked a few questions, and found out all he could tell me; and that is all, sir, I think.’

‘Very good,’ commented Mr. Ramsden; and now turning to Mr. Mason, he added, ‘I suppose you will leave the matter with me.’

‘Heaven knows I do not desire to have any say in it,’ answered the young man; then, turning to Mrs. Calcey, he added, ‘You will not mention the affair to any one without my permission, Ellen.’

‘No, sir. I never have said a word about it except to my mother; and I should not have spoken now, only that I could not rest with the weight of it on my mind.’

CHAPTER VII.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

CHRISTMAS-EVE came to the great world of London, and especially, so it seemed to Mrs. Calcey, to the large house in the unfashionable square.

Such a season for gifts was never beheld. Such people for giving as the Montrelles it would have been difficult to find.

Out of their small income they contrived to make more homes happy than many with ten times their wealth.

As for Miss Molly, a sum of money had been sent to her on the morning of the 24th, anonymously, which quite turned her head.

On the inside of the envelope was written in an unknown hand:

‘A trifle to aid in helping your humble friends to spend a merry Christmas.’

And be sure that money did not long burn her pocket.

To one she sent coals; to another a joint; to a third some warm apparel; where there were children, toys; where there was illness, the nourishment or the attendance which seemed most needed. Ellen was about with her all that day; and Ellen watched her in the evening, when Mr. Mason came and kissed her, not under the mistletoe, but away from all the others.

‘My darling,’ he said, ‘I wonder if before this time next year you will agree to make me as happy as you have those poor people to-day.’

And there was a hopeful tone in his voice, and a glad light in his eye, Ellen had never heard in the one, or seen before in the other.

That night, as they gathered round the hearth, after all the guests had departed, his talk ran on Martinly Hall.

'Now would be the time for you to see the place, Mrs. Montrelle,' he said, 'while it is tenantless;' and then they all laughed at the idea, as though it were a capital joke; and one of the boys insisted upon the ghost story associated with the Hall being repeated at length, and the younger girls said they should be afraid to go to bed after hearing it, and Molly smiled softly with a tender love-light shining in her sweet face.

The next morning what kissing and making of presents there was before breakfast! It was a pretty sight to see the family gathered about their mother, wishing her a merry, merry Christmas, and papa wiping his spectacles with suspicious persistency, and saying, 'There, there, that will do! Why, you might still be babies!'

Not a servant in the house was forgotten. Even the boy who cleaned the knives and polished the boots found his present lying ready directed beside his brushes, and a bright half-crown folded in tissue-paper for him to take home to his grandmother.

They all went to church, and after an early dinner spent a quiet cosy evening.

They never had much company on a Christmas-day; only their own, very own, people—mamma's sisters and brothers, and papa's only nephew and niece. There were no reconciliations, because there were no preceding quarrels; but all family ties seemed to be knit more closely upon each succeeding Christmas-day; and the children learnt from the looks they saw passing amongst their elders many and many a lesson, which served them in good stead when the time came for them to go out into the world, and to strive and keep their hearts untainted by it.

Before they separated, Mr. Ma-

son pressed into the hand of each person present a little note.

'It is only an invitation,' he explained; and then went away, to let them read his words at their leisure.

'I want you all to do me the great favour of spending Twelfth-day at Martinly Hall,' that was what he said; 'Mr. Montrelle will arrange about the journey, if you can do me this kindness.'

Then there was a great cry.

He had not been jesting, then; something wonderful had happened, and papa was in the secret.

'And Molly too,' added the boys.

'No,' said Molly. 'I know nothing; but I think there is something to know, and that papa knows it.'

'And papa is not going to tell it,' answered that gentleman. 'However, I may inform you that a most wonderful twelfth-cake is going to be ordered to-morrow, and that I for one mean to accept the invitation.'

'You would like to know what has been done, and how Mrs. Wilkins took it all,' remarked Mr. Ramsden to Ellen, when he asked to see her for a minute ere leaving town. 'There is not going to be any trial or any prison or any punishment. We ought not, of course, to have shown mercy; but Mr. Mason's heart is softer than the typical nether millstone, and he found it easier to forgive your old mistress than to send her to prison.'

'I went down and had a quiet chat with her; remarked that we knew everything, even to the fact of her having vainly tried to insure her daughter's life. (I heard that quite accidentally, and it was refused because her lungs were hopelessly gone.)

'She is a wonderful old lady.

She listened to me without saying a word till I had quite finished ; then she asked,

"Can't you give me a fortnight ? By that time Mrs. Mason will be transformed into Mrs. Glive."

"No," I answered, "not an hour."

"You will leave us our savings, at any rate," she persisted.

"Yes," I said, "we would do that."

"And you will keep it out of the newspapers."

"I agreed to do that also, if she promised to make some excuse to the vicar at Purling for breaking off the match.

"If you like to live honestly for the future," I said, "we will not prevent you doing so ; but we will not allow you to spoil any more lives—do you understand ?"

"Miss Wilkins was even easier to manage. She reproached her aunt in no measured terms, and wrote and signed a full confession of the rise and progress of the imposition. That is all I have to say about them. There will be a wedding in the spring, I hope, and a bride at Martinly, God bless her !"

As for the Twelfth-day at Martinly, was there ever such a Twelfth-day spent anywhere before or since ? Such cartloads of holly, such piles of red berries, such miles of green wreaths, such lavish adornment of the old portraits, such fires, such logs of wood, such a

welcome, such fare, such a cake, only eclipsed by one which was cut when the primroses were dotting the hedegrows, and the snowdrops were blooming above the bare earth.

The master had come to his own, and not a heart could be so cold or envious as to refrain from wishing him joy.

And flitting about the dear old house, half frightened, half pleased, too simple to be over-elated, and yet too wise to realise the magnitude of the change which had so suddenly been wrought, was that dear Miss Molly, who had, so her father said, made poverty seem sweeter to him, and who would enhance all the pleasures his riches could bring to the owner of Martinly.

"You are to keep the lodge, Ellen, if you will," said Mr. Mason to Mrs. Calcey, pointing to a dear little house, built of dark stone and covered all over with roses and creepers.

"And bring your mother and the children to live with you," supplemented Miss Molly.

But Ellen could not answer either of them for happy tears. She felt it would be easier for her to leave the cottage by the canal than to part from Miss Molly.

That was a Twelfth-day ! It is remembered and talked about still in many a home, from which the shadows were lifted when the owner crossed the threshold of the house he had hitherto scarcely looked upon as his own.

THE SQUIRE'S WIG

(Written in 1869).

[The *Athenæum*, reporting on the visit of the Archæological Institute to Bury St. Edmunds, says: 'Among the miscellaneous books must be noted the gossiping diary of a squire of the last century, William Coe, of West Row, in the parish of Mildenhall, who relates more than once to this effect: "1700. Feb. 14. Mr. Eldred of Bury cutt off my girls hair (viz.) Judith, Anne, and Elizabeth, to make me a wigg, 10 ounces bare weight.—May 7. Received a wigg made of my girls hair as abovesaid, weighing 8½ ounces bare weight; cost 8s. making."']

FLAT is the shire of the southern folk,
And its streams are sluggish, very;
And they say you seldom hear a joke
In the town of St. Edmund's Bury:
But that's a story too absurd
To satisfy psychologists;
And I guess that numerous jokes were heard
In the days of the Archæologists,
When light was thrown on topics dark
Beside the lazy river Larke.

A golden shire of plenteous corn,
Which in August tide grows yellow;
And for jolly squires that wheat is shorn,
Who love old ale and mellow:
But from ancient habits well men know
In these days we vastly vary;
And where's Squire Coe of fair West Row,
In the reign of William and Mary—
The squire who with punch defied all care,
And made a wig of his daughters' hair?

Lo, where they sit, those maidens three,
A sight for young beholders;
With viol or book upon shapely knee,
Long locks over rose-white shoulders:
No trace of grief in their mien appears,
And they look demurely merry;
Though they wait, alas, for the fatal shears
Which the barber brings from Bury.
No fairer Anglians e'er drew breath
Than Judith, Anne, Elizabeth.

Ah, what would say the Suffolk girl
In these days of advanced opinion,
If asked to yield but one bright curl
That veils her voluminous *chignon*?
What Suffolk squire, though never a hair
His sterile scalp can harbour,
To shear his daughters' tresses, dare
Send for the Bury barber?
'Tis well Squire Coe in the mould lies low,
For this is a world he scarce would know.

MORTIMER COLLINS.

